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Out of Iraq! No War on Iran!

FOCUS ON
IRAQ/IRAN

Iraqis have been resisting since the U.S. military invaded in 2003. Rationales provided for the U.S. presence have varied over time. From 2014, the U.S. was in Iraq supposedly to defeat ISIS, but who believes it any more?

Only recently on December 29, the American Air Force bombed the Iraqi militia group, Kata'ib Hezbollah, which was on the Iraq-Syria border to defend against ISIS. The U.S. bombing, which killed 25 militiamen and wounded more than 50, was supposedly in retaliation for a civilian contractor death caused by a rocket fired into a U.S.-Iraqi military base.

The militia group is part of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF). As of 2016, largely due to the PMF

success defending against ISIS, the PMF was officially incorporated into the Iraqi Armed Forces through an act of Parliament – so the U.S., had in effect, bombed a component of the Iraqi state. (Protesters, stoked by anger at the attack, stormed the U.S. embassy in Baghdad two days after the bombing incident. Trump responded by moving more U.S. soldiers into the area.)

Then on January 3, came the shocking murder by U.S. drone at the Baghdad airport of PMF Deputy Commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandes and Major General Soleimani of the al Quds force, Iranian Revolutionary Guard, regarded as a leader of heroic stature for defeating ISIS in the region. Foreign and alternative press reported that Soleimani had come to Iraq on a diplomatic

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Protestors in Minneapolis on January 25, 2020. Photo: Kim DeFranco.

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

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Women Against Military Madness is a nonviolent, feminist organization, founded in 1982, that works in solidarity with others to create a system of social equality, self-determination and justice through education, action and the empowerment of women. WAMM's purpose is to dismantle systems of militarism, economic exploitation and global oppression.

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U.S. Out of Iraq.... *continued from page 1*

FOCUS ON IRAQ/IRAN mission to provide a response from Iran to a message from Saudi Arabia about de-escalating tensions in the region, but it turned out to be a setup for assassination meant to *inflame* Iran.

Upon his death, U.S. officials made announcements vilifying Soleimani. U.S. social media companies censored posts considered favorable to him.

The Iraqi Parliament called an emergency session on January 5 and decided that the U.S. must leave the country immediately because it has violated its obligations, affronted Iraq's sovereignty and jeopardized its stability. Virulently anti-Iran U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo quickly dismissed any intent of withdrawing troops. There goes the rationale about bringing democracy to the Middle East.

The Million Man March was called by populist Iraqi leader Muqtada al-Sadar and Iraqis flooded into the streets on January 24, bearing Iraqi flags and signs demanding the U.S. leave. *Al Jazeera*



The message is clear in this sign in the Million Man March

reported a wide range of participants including rival mainstream Shia parties and Popular Mobilization Forces with Iran-backed groups among them, leaving no doubt that Iraqis want the U.S. out.

In the U.S., nationwide protests were called for January 4 and January 25 and thousands in cities across the country experienced déjà vu as "Out of Iraq" and "No War on Iran" signs appeared again. **Important:** *be sure to read Sami Rasouli on how we feel in Iraq, page 10.*

Flight 752 Out of Tehran

by Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich and Finian Cunningham

FOCUS ON IRAN The 19-second video of Flight PS752 published by *The New York Times* showing the moment an Iranian missile hit a passenger jet has prompted much social media skepticism. Questions arise about the improbable timing and circumstances of recording the precise moment when the plane was hit.

The newspaper ran the splash story on January 9, the day after a Ukrainian airliner was brought down near Tehran. It was headlined: "Video Shows Ukrainian Plane Being Hit Over Iran."

All 176 people onboard were killed. Two days later, the Iranian military admitted that one of its air defense units had fired at the plane in the mistaken belief that it was an incoming enemy cruise missile.

"A smoking gun" was how *The New York Times'* journalist Christiaan Triebert described the video in a tweet. Triebert works in the visual investigations team at the paper. In the same tweet, he thanked – "a very big shout out" – to an Iranian national by the name of Nariman Gharib "who provided it [the

video] to *The New York Times*, and the videographer, who would like to remain anonymous?”

The anonymous videographer is the person who caught the 19-second clip which shows a missile striking Flight PS752 shortly after take-off from Tehran’s Imam Khomeini airport at around 6:15 a.m. This person, who remains silent during the filming while smoking a cigarette (the smoke briefly wafts over the screen), is standing in the suburb of Parand looking northwest. His location was verified by *The New York Times* using satellite data. The rapid way the newspaper’s technical resources were marshaled raises a curious question about how a seemingly random video submission was afforded such punctilious attention.

But the big question which many people on social media are asking is: why was this “videographer” standing in a derelict industrial area outside Tehran at around six o’clock in the morning with a mobile phone camera training on a fixed angle to the darkened sky? The airliner is barely visible, yet the sky-watching person has the camera pointed and ready to film a most dramatic event, seconds before it happened. That strongly suggests foreknowledge.

Given that something awful has just been witnessed, it is all the more strange that the person holding the camera remains calm and unshaken. There is no audible expression of shock or even the slightest disquiet.

Turns out that Nariman Gharib, the guy who received the video and was credited by *The New York Times* for submitting it, is a vociferous anti-Iranian government dissident who does not live in Iran. He ardently promotes regime change in his social media posts.

Christiaan Triebert, *The New York Times*’ video expert, who collaborated



closely with Gharib to get the story out within hours of the incident, previously worked as a senior investigator at Bellingcat. Bellingcat calls itself an independent online investigative journalism project, but numerous critics accuse it of being a media adjunct to Western military intelligence. Bellingcat has been a big proponent of media narratives smearing the Russian and Syrian governments over the MH17 shoot-down in Ukraine in 2014 and chemical weapons attacks.

In the latest shoot-down of the airliner above Tehran, the tight liaison between a suspiciously placed anonymous videographer on the ground and an expatriate Iranian dissident who then gets the prompt and generous technical attention of *The New York Times* suggests a level of orchestration, not, as we are led to believe, a random happenstance submission. More sinisterly, the fateful incident was a setup.

It seems reasonable to speculate that in the early hours of January 8 a calamitous incident was contrived to happen. The shoot-down occurred only four hours after Iran attacked two U.S. military bases in Iraq. Those attacks were in revenge for the American drone assassination on January 3 of Iran’s top military commander, Maj. General Qassem Soleimani.

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WAMM Committees

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- Ground All Drones
- Middle East
- St. Joan of Arc/
WAMM Peacemakers
- Second Monday Movies
- Solidarity Committee on the Americas
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Flight 752 Out of Tehran

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Subsequently, Iranian air-defense systems were on high alert for a possible counterstrike by U.S. forces. Several reports indicate that the Iranian defense radars were detecting warnings of incoming enemy warplanes and cruise missiles on the morning of January 8. It does seem odd why the Iranian authorities did not cancel all commercial flights out of Tehran during that period. Perhaps because civilian airliners can normally be differentiated by radar and other signals from military objects.

However, with the electronic warfare (EW) technology that the U.S. has developed in recent years it is entirely feasible for enemy military radars to be “spoofed” by phantom objects. One such EW developed by the Pentagon is Miniature Air-Launched Decoy (MALD) which can create deceptive signals on enemy radar systems of incoming warheads.

What we contend therefore is this: the Americans exploited a brink-of-war scenario in which they anticipated Iranian air-defense systems to be on hair-trigger alert. Add to this tension an assault by electronic warfare on Iranian military radars in which it would be technically feasible to distort a civilian airliner’s data as an offensive target. The Iranian military has claimed this was the nature of the shoot-down error. It seems plausible, given the existing electronic warfare used by the Pentagon.

It’s a fair, albeit nefarious, bet that the flight paths out of Tehran were deliberately put in an extremely dangerous position by the malicious assault from American electronic warfare. A guy placed on the ground scoping the outward flight paths – times known by publicly available schedules – would be thus on hand to catch on video the provoked errant missile shot.

The shoot-down setup would explain why Western intelligence were so quick to confidently assert what

happened, contradicting Iran’s initial claims of a technical onboard plane failure.

The disaster has gravely undermined the Iranian government, both at home and around the world. Protests have erupted in Iran denouncing the authorities and the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corp for “lying” about the crash. Most of the 176 victims were Iranian nationals. The anger on the streets is being fueled by the public comments of Western leaders like Donald Trump, who no doubt see the clamor and recriminations as an opportunity to push harder for regime change in Iran.

Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich is an independent researcher and writer with a focus on U.S. foreign policy. Her writings are published nationally and internationally, and she is a guest political commentator on radio and television. Finian Cunningham is a writer and media commentator who has written extensively on international affairs.

Iran Unrest: Protests and Provocations



November 24, 2019, Iran: When protests in Hong Kong, Iraq, and Lebanon erupted, I was fully anticipating protests in Iran to follow. In 2018 alone, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) had spent millions of dollars in these countries (and elsewhere) to promote America’s agenda. However, I did not expect unrest in Iran to take place while I was visiting the country. In retrospect, I am glad that I was here to be witness to these latest events.

On Thursday, November 21st, friends took me to an Iranian restaurant in the heart of the city. During

our lunch, they talked about there being a price hike in gasoline. After lunch, we walked around the charming downtown area of Tehran, visited shops, and, exhausted, climbed into a cab. We asked the cab driver if he had heard anything about prices going up. He told us that this was just a rumor. Only rumor it was not. A few short hours later, at midnight, the price hike went into effect. The next day was Friday, a holiday in Iran. The increase in the price of gasoline took Iranians by surprise. Regrettably, the government of President Rouhani had not explained the rationale behind the price increase *prior* to the increase itself. In sev-

by Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich
eral parts of Iran, protests erupted – perhaps justified, and they were peaceful. One could argue they were disruptive in that cars blocked roads, making it difficult for others, causing traffic jams, but there was no vandalism on the first day – not to my knowledge.

But calm soon gave way to violence. A friend who lives in the suburbs of Tehran, in Karaj, told me that on a single street in that sleepy suburb, protestors had set four banks on fire. Elsewhere, police stations were attacked, and banks and gas stations set on fire. Businesses were set on fire and destroyed. People were sending text messages to each other giving

locations of alleged protests in the hopes of gathering people in one spot or another.

This did not surprise me. I was certain that a “swarming” tactic was being implemented. It was first developed by the U.S. strategic think tank, RAND, as a military and tactical tool. RAND’s publication, “Swarming & the Future of Conflict” states:

“In Athena’s Camp,¹ we speculated that swarming is already emerging as an appropriate doctrine for networked forces to wage information-age conflict. This nascent doctrine derives from the fact that robust connectivity allows for the creation of a multitude of small units of maneuver, networked in such a fashion that, although they might be widely distributed, they can still come together, at will and repeatedly, to deal resounding blows to their adversaries. This study builds on these earlier findings by inquiring at length into why and how swarming might be emerging as a preferred mode of conflict for small, dispersed, internetted units. In our view, swarming will likely be the future of conflict.”

And: “Social conflict also features pack-like organizations, as exemplified by modern-day ‘soccer hooligans.’ They generally operate in a loosely dispersed fashion, then swarm against targets of opportunity who are ‘cut out’ from a larger group of people. The use of modern



Electronic communications and foreign media act as today’s Trojan horses. Sculpture from American film, Troy.

information technologies – from the Internet to cell phones – has facilitated plans and operations by such gangs.”²

Swarming depends on robust information flow and is a necessary condition for the success of this tactic. In other words, by controlling communication and sending texts to “protesters,” random groups are mobilized together in one or various spots. Chaos ensues, which naturally draws reaction. One is never aware of the origin of the messages. Interestingly, in one of her talks, Suzanne Maloney seemed to know the exact number of cell phones in use in Iran.³ (Maloney is the deputy director of foreign relations and senior fellow at the Brookings Center for Middle East Policy, where her research focuses on Iran and Persian Gulf energy.) These text messages in Iran increased in number, as did the vandalism and the reaction to the destructive behavior. This was not the first time that this

tactic had been used in Iran. But it was the first time that Iran’s adversaries were surprised, shocked even, to see that Iran was capable of shutting down the internet so quickly in order to put a stop to the spread of violence and restore calm.

I drove around in Tehran from end to end, either with friends or in a cab, and took note of the streets. I watched both Iranian TV news and foreign media such as BBC Persian, Voice of America (VOA), Radio Farda (the U.S.-funded Iranian branch of VOA broadcasting from Prague), and Saudi-funded Iran International broadcast into Iran through satellite (at times jammed) – all encouraging people to get out on the streets and protest.

Iran was covered under a blanket of snow. With freezing temperatures, I was amused to see BBC Persian show pictures of “demonstrators” in T-shirts. I was angry to see Reza

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U.S. Out of Iraq....

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Pahlavi, the deposed shah of Iran appear on Iran International encouraging people to get out onto the streets. I felt insulted on behalf of every Iranian when U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo retweeted an old tweet and then tweeted again that he “was with the Iranian people” – not with them so they could eat, or receive medicinal goods, or with them to address their desire for peace and security, but with the idea that they could endure all kinds of hardship and be subjected to American terrorism (sanctions) and go out on the streets to protest in order to promote America’s agenda.

The hostile foreign media even showed pictures of a “protester” handing out flowers to security personnel – a symbol first used against the Pentagon in 1967 by a woman protesting the Vietnam War (and later in the 2014 U.S.-backed coup in Ukraine). Except that I could not tell if the picture I saw streaming through the foreign media’s satellite television was in Iran or not. The viewer was told it was. The symbol was powerful, but I doubt very much that it was an indigenous one.

With the internet disconnected, foreign media propaganda then had its viewers believe people were calling from inside Iran; eyewitnesses were reporting events. They heard a voice telling BBC, or Iran International, what was going on – just a voice which would no doubt then be picked up as eyewitness testimony and shared in all media outlets. The ease with which individuals

in various target countries always manage to get directly through to television stations has always fascinated me. No automated answer – just straight to the newsroom.

In all this, I can’t help but ask why it was that none of the banks and gas stations set on fire, buildings burnt, and businesses ruined were located in the pro-West parts of Tehran. There life continued without a hitch – homes were safe, businesses were safe. After all, the main reason for the gasoline price increase was to help the less affluent and the poor. Perhaps, as Daniel McAdams of the Ron Paul Institute said of the CIA’s role behind the uprisings: Michael D’Andrea, aka “Ayatollah Mike,” who runs the CIA’s Iran operations, wanted these pro-Western entities to be safe.

Regardless of the reason, the CIA/NED spent millions and failed in Iran – again.

Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich is an independent researcher and

writer with a focus on U.S. foreign policy. Her writings are published nationally and internationally, and she is a guest political commentator on radio and television.

ENDNOTES

1. The reference to Athena is because “...where warfare is about information, the superior deity is Athena – the Greek goddess of wisdom who sprang fully armed from Zeus’s head...Athena sided with the Greeks in the Trojan War, where she bested Ares on the battlefield and conceived the idea of the wooden ‘gift horse’ secretly loaded with Greek soldiers.” John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt. “Information, Power, and Grand Strategy: In Athena’s Camp.” Rand Corporation. tinyurl.com/wvyqdye
2. RAND cited: Sullivan, John, “Third Generation Street Gangs: Turf, Cartels, and Net Warriors,” Transnational Organized Crime, Vol. 3, No. 3, Autumn 1997, pp. 95–108. tinyurl.com/rzlfef8
3. “U.S. Policy toward Iran.” Discussion sponsored by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. April 29, 2019. C-SPAN.org



Image: ned.org The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is a public/private agency funded by the U.S. government but without Congressional oversight.

Sanctions Are an Act of War

The sanctions can kill. Those imposed by the U.S. are backed up by the U.S. Treasury which is able to block cash transfers going through the dollar denominated international banking system. Banks that do not comply with America's imposed rules can themselves be sanctioned, meaning that U.S. sanctions are *de facto* globally applicable, even if foreign banks and governments do not agree with the policies that drive them. It is well documented how sanctions that have an impact on the importation of medicines have killed thousands of Iranians...

The Iraqi position also immediately produced presidential threats and tweets about 'sanctions like they have never seen,' with the implication that the U.S. was more than willing to wreck the Iraqi economy if it did not get its way.

– Philip Giraldi, *A New Definition of Warfare, sanctions can be more deadly than bullets, January 21, 2020 UNZ, unz.com*

Tehran and Baghdad: Mourning and Outrage

Massive numbers of people took to the streets of Tehran in sincere mourning and outraged protest following Major General Soleimani's assassination. Baghdad was also the scene of mourning as large crowds thronged into the streets in the funeral procession bearing the caskets of both Soleimani and Iraq's Popular Militia Force Deputy Commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandes, revered for their leadership defending against ISIS.

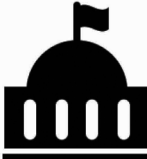
Responsible for the deaths of 600 U.S. soldiers? Not True. See investigative historian and journalist Gareth Porter's article, "Lies About Iran Killing U.S. Troops in Iraq Are a Ploy to Justify War" at Truthout (tinyurl.com/y59egboa).




Gareth Porter @GarethPorter
Big media are all repeating the Trump-Pompeo justification that #Soleimani was responsible for killing 600 American boys in Iraq. But as I've documented in great detail, that was a completely fabricated story Cheney was using to justify an attack on Iran.

Lies About Iran Killing US Troops in Iraq Are a Ploy to Justify War
This bit of propaganda was floated by Vice President Cheney over a decade ago to justify his push for war against Iran.
truthout.org


U.S. SANCTIONS KILL WOMEN IN 39 COUNTRIES— 1/3 OF THE WORLD!




CURRENCIES ARE DEVALUED AND INFLATED WHEN SANCTIONS ARE LEVIED. INTERNATIONAL CREDIT RATINGS TANK, AND COUNTRIES ARE PRESSURED TO STOP DOING BUSINESS WITH TARGETED COUNTRIES.




BECAUSE THE U.S. HOLDS TRADE, BANKING AND MILITARY DOMINANCE OVER MOST OF THE WORLD, SANCTIONS HAVE KILLED MILLIONS OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE. MISLEADING CLAIMS IN THE U.S. MEDIA ABOUT WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN COUNTRIES SUCH AS IRAN, PALESTINE AND NORTH KOREA ARE USED TO JUSTIFY SANCTIONS AGAINST THOSE COUNTRIES, KILLING WOMEN THERE.



THE U.S. AND THE E.U. PASS LAWS TO BAN, BLOCK, OR RESTRICT TRADE TO A SPECIFIC COUNTRY, GROUP OR INDIVIDUALS WHEN THEY DO NOT COMPLY WITH U.S./E.U. FOREIGN POLICY. SANCTIONS PRIMARILY AFFECT THE MOST VULNERABLE GROUPS: WOMEN AND CHILDREN, THE POOR, OPPRESSED NATIONS, THE ELDERLY AND THE SICK.



THE FIRST SECTORS AFFECTED ARE GENERALLY MEDICINES, COST OF FOOD, POWER, WATER TREATMENT, FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS AND OTHER ESSENTIAL HUMAN NEEDS. U.S. SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAQ IN THE 90S ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATHS OF AT LEAST 500,000 THOUSAND CHILDREN.



SANCTIONS VIOLATE INTERNATIONAL LAW, THE UN CHARTER, GENEVA AND NUREMBERG CONVENTIONS BECAUSE THEY TARGET CIVILIANS BY ECONOMIC STRANGULATION, CREATING FAMINES, LIFE THREATENING SHORTAGES AND ECONOMIC CHAOS.

LEARN MORE AT SANCTIONSILL.ORG

Defying Doomsday

by Karen Levad

FOCUS ON
PEACE

The Ribbon Minnesota action will culminate in marking the 75th Anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima on August 4, 2020

Members at Spirit of St. Stephens Catholic Community in Minneapolis thought that the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima needed to be acknowledged in a prayerful, deliberate way. For inspiration they looked back to 1984 when over 27,000 people gathered in Washington, D.C. to encircle the Pentagon, a symbol of war, with The Ribbon, a symbol of Peace.

The Ribbon was made up of thousands of strips of cloth measuring 36" wide by 18" long containing heartfelt symbols and words depicting what each individual maker "couldn't bear to think of as being lost forever in nuclear war." Each Ribbon segment was tied one to another until The Ribbon held by participants extended for 14 miles wrapping around the Pentagon, coursing its way across the Potomac River, running on through the Washington Mall, and encircling the U.S. Capital building. At the time, populist media star Studs Terkel commented that, "the beauty of The Ribbon and the source of its power lie in the fact that it was created by hundreds of private citizens from across the U.S. and around the world."

Recent international events make it all too clear that nuclear war is more than a possibility. We are once again at the brink with some experts saying not if, but when. On



January 23, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists announced that they had moved the Doomsday Clock ahead – now calculating the likelihood of global catastrophe in 2020 at 100 seconds to midnight. (tinyurl.com/vkct549) Certainly one response to all this is to sink into despair. But The Ribbon suggests a different option. The energy that goes into creating a Ribbon segment allows us to make tangible the hope we carry in our hearts.

Justine Merritt, a suburban Chicago grandmother and teacher turned activist, conceived the idea of The Ribbon, describing each segment as a sign of tangible hope. She wrote, "When I was making my own ribbon panel, I found that as I would thread my needle, I was confronting the fear, confronting the grief and terror. As I drew the needle up through the

cloth, I was praying for peace, and the prayer became an affirmation of life." Starting in 1982 with her Christmas card list, Merritt invited others to create their own symbols. With grassroots support, Merritt journeyed across America, telling her story, reading her poetry and inspiring others to join her. She even came to Minnesota on occasion and thanks to the support and guidance of local organizers Gail Irish, Patty Guerrero, and Barb Britain, 440 Minnesota Ribbon segments were linked together on that August day in Washington, D.C. While thousands gathered in Washington D.C., others gathered in Japan to encircle the Atomic Bomb Dome in Hiroshima.

The Ribbon International, a nongovernmental organization located in New York City, continues to encourage creativity and promote



peace. Ribbon events are planned in New York City and in other cities around the world. (www.theribboninternational.org). The Ribbon Minnesota is part of this international creative movement. Organizers have already made a small number of beautiful, loving, peaceful Ribbon segments. We plan to grow peace by piece, encouraging others to join us as we go.

What will we do with these Ribbon segments we create? In Minnesota, we will be present at all of the various 75th anniversary commemoration events scheduled in Minneapolis and St. Paul August 5 to 8. Prior to that, The Ribbon segments may show up at Earth Day events or 4th of July parades or other locations to promote peace and nuclear disarmament. This is a very organic project and it will unfold as it will.

In 1985 Justine wrote, “We hope that The Ribbon will help political leaders from around the world realize that perhaps they have misjudged the deep yearning for peace within the people. We hope that The Ribbon will encourage those leaders to move ahead with greater resolve, to move ahead continuously, not always easily, but continuously, toward a planet without nuclear weapons.” May it be so today.

Karen Levad is a member of the St. Stephens Community, grandmother, and organizer of The Ribbon Minnesota.

ACTION: If you are in the Twin Cities area reading this, consider joining us. For more information about The Ribbon Minnesota, check out our webpage peacribbonmn.net. To find specific Ribbon Making Parties, see the WAMM calendar at womenagainstmilitarymadness.org or call the WAMM office at 612-827-5364. Outside the Twin Cities area, we invite



you to consider forming your own The Ribbon project.

How to Make a Ribbon Panel

- Each finished Ribbon panel is a double thickness of material 36" wide by 18" high. The most common material used is off-white muslin. On each corner, attach a 12" strip of ribbon or bias tape so that your panel can be attached to another.
- Don't sew? We can help you out! Blank Ribbon panels are available for a small donation.
- On this panel sew, paint, write, embroider, applique, weave, knit, tie dye or use crayons or ornaments of any kind to express what you most love about the world and want to protect from nuclear insanity.
- On the back, write your name, address, email address and any story or message you want to share.
- When you've finished your panel, please send a picture of it to karen.levad@gmail.com along with your contact information.
- You don't need to be an "artist" to make a Ribbon panel. Many panels are a collaborative effort. Make this a team project! Invite others to help!
- Have an idea of where The Ribbon Minnesota should be present? Let us know so we can promote a Ribbon event!

All ages and genders are encouraged to participate in the project. Some panels will be a work of art. All panels will be a works of heart!

ACTION: Have Your Senators Heard from You? Call Them to Ban Nuclear Weapons! Of all the issues that their constituents contact them about, Senate offices report that nuclear weapons have not been among them. We need to elevate the concern about this existential threat. In Minnesota, volunteers from the WAMM Campaign to Ban Nuclear Weapons and Veterans for Peace Chapter 27 have obtained at least one signature from every single municipality (851 incorporated towns and cities, 41 unincorporated) to total 22,768 signatures on a petition to urge the U.S. to sign and ratify the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Activists are in the process of delivering the petitions to their U.S. and state senators. Support this action: **Call your senators Amy Klobuchar at (202) 224-3244 and Tina Smith at (202) 224-5641** and urge them to have the U.S. sign and ratify the treaty!

Iraq: Caught in the Crossfire

from a letter written by Sami Rasouli



Iraq is in the crossfire with the competition of foreign actors and their use of the nation in pursuit of their own interests. After WWII, as part of the Marshall Plan rebuilding industrial Europe as its ally against Russia in the Cold War, the U.S. decided oil from Middle Eastern sources was needed. Truman's Defense Secretary James Forrestal said: 'It [the Marshall Plan] wouldn't have succeeded without access to Middle Eastern sources.' The U.S. and its allies were determined to prevent any other force from controlling the region. Israel has been allowed to fly over Iraqi air space to bomb Syria, where the U.S. and Russia have engaged militarily. The U.S. is endangering Iraq with its threats to Iran, which defends itself in the region.

About the subject of how we feel in Iraq toward whether the U.S. forces should stay or leave Iraq, I would like to share my thoughts:

The Constructive Chaos concept for the Middle East, announced by then National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice and carried out since with the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, was creating and supporting extremist religious organizations such as Al Qaeda and ISIS that spread death and destruction across the cities in the Arab countries.

The American presence can spur extremist activity, as evidenced by the growth of various anti-American rebellions and groups that had not previously existed throughout the Middle East since the invasion of Iraq.

The American presence sets a target for American forces to be attacked by extremist elements, while also operating as a tripwire for a potential destructive and tragic war with Iran.

Insisting on staying in Iraq unnecessarily puts American forces in harm's way and danger.

The U.S. administration is continuing its Maximum Pressure campaign to influence the Iranian regime that is, by its nature, a policy of escalation. Maximum Pressure is bringing the U.S. closer to another war in the Middle East. It has certainly done nothing to make negotiations more likely.

The U.S. should leave the entire Middle East.

Sami Rasouli, Muslim Peacemaker Team, January 24, 2020, Najaf, Iraq

UPDATE: The U.S. has plans to build three more bases in northern Iraq near the border of Iran, according to a January 27 report from the military-industrial source, *Breaking Defense*. It is now widely reported in the media that the U.S. wants to install Patriot missiles in Iraq but approval is currently withheld by the Iraqi government. But does its approval matter?

Keep the light of peace burning!
Give the gift of a WAMM membership to someone, join, or renew.



WAMM Membership

- \$15-39 Low Income/Student membership
- \$40-59 Individual membership
- \$60-199 Household membership
- \$200+ Major Donor

This is a new membership This is a membership renewal This is a gift membership

Check enclosed Please charge my credit card Total amount enclosed \$_____

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

Make checks payable to WAMM, 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 3, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55407

Sustaining Membership

(Ongoing contributions throughout the year)

\$_____ Monthly \$_____ Quarterly

(WAMM will send a coupon book, if by check)

WAMM Calendar

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

Ongoing Peace/ Justice Vigils *Vigil to End War*

Every Wednesday, 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. Lake Street/Marshall Avenue Bridge. Signs available on St. Paul side. Brief circle up for announcements after the vigil on St. Paul side. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Vigil to End the Occupation of Palestine

Every Friday, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. corner of Summit Avenue and Snelling Avenue, St. Paul. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Peace Vigil

Every Tuesday, 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. on the east side of the Franklin Avenue Bridge, Minneapolis. Sponsored by: Prospect Hill Neighbors for Peace. FFI: 612-379-7398.

Grandmothers for Peace Vigil

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

Immigrant Solidarity Vigils

Every Tuesday, 7:30 a.m. Stand up for justice, say NO to family separation, deportation. Gather weekly with signs (bring your own or use one provided) at ICE entrance closest to Fort Snelling light rail station. Vigil on Minnehaha Ave., Minneapolis by the sign at the

driveway entrance to ICE. Rain or shine. (If using GPS—6000 Minnehaha Ave, Minneapolis). FFI: Call Pepper 612-701-6963 or Mary Lou 612-280-0354

Second Tuesday of every month, 7:30 a.m.

Interfaith Coalition on Immigration (ICOM) gathers in solidarity with immigrants and refugees to achieve justice and stand up to systems of oppression. Vigil outside the Bishop Whipple Building, 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling. St. Paul. FFI: Facebook: Interfaith Coalition on Immigration (ICOM).

WAMM Committee Meetings

Board Meeting

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

Book Club

Third Saturday of every month. 10 a.m. to Noon. Episcopal Senior Living Complex, Welcome Center, 1860 University Ave. W., St. Paul. FFI: 612-827-5364.

End War

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

Ground All Drones

Times/dates pending. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Middle East

Second Monday of every month, 10:00 a.m. at Kenwood Isles Condominiums, 28th and Hennepin Ave. So., Mpls.. FFI: 612-827-5364.

St. Joan of Arc/ WAMM Peacemakers

Fourth Tuesday of every month, 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. St. Joan of Arc Church, Parish Center, 4537 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis. FFI: Call Barbara 612-722-4444 or Bill 612-926-8459.

Solidarity Committee on the Americas (SCOTA)

Second Thursday of every month, 11:00 a.m. WAMM Office, 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Tackling Torture at the Top (T3)

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

Ongoing Events

People of Faith Peacemakers Breakfast

Second and fourth Wednesdays of every month, 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. African Development Center, Riverside and 20th Avenues South, Minneapolis. Peace with justice resource, support group. FFI: Visit justviewpoint.org or call 612-333-4772.

Grandmothers for Peace

First Wednesday of every month, 12:45 p.m. Edina Public Library, 5280 Grandview Square, Edina. Justice issue programs for understanding our role in changing systems. FFI: 952-929-1566.

Middle East Peace Now

Usually second or third Saturday. Refreshments 9:30 a.m. Program 10:00 a.m. Location varies. FFI: Visit mepn.org.

WAMM Second Monday at the Movies

Second Monday of every month, 7:00 p.m. 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis. Projected on big screen. Free admission, popcorn. All welcome. Discussion follows film. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Official Secrets

March 9. 7:00 p.m. British whistleblower in lead up to the 2003 military invasion of Iraq.

Miss a movie? DVD collection is available for check-out in the WAMM office.

Special Events

February Coffee Hour

Saturday, February 15, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Focus on Chile with Michael Livingston. Sponsored by the Solidarity Committee on the Americas (SCOTA). Bagels and coffee provided. FFI: 612-827-5364.

The Ribbon Project

Join us in workshops to create a ribbon of peace to display on the 75th anniversary of the U.S. military bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Multiple local workshops planned. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Making the Connections: Climate Crisis and U.S. Militarism

Saturday, February 29, 10:00 a.m. 4200 Cedar Avenue, Minneapolis. A presentation by Sue Ann Martinson followed by Q&A. Sponsored by the End War Committee of WAMM and Veterans for Peace Chapter 27. FFI: 612-827-5364.

WAMM Annual Meeting

Saturday, March 28, 10:00 a.m. Spirit of St. Stephens Catholic Community, 2201 First Avenue South, Minneapolis. See ad on back page. FFI: 612-827-5364.



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Join us for the WAMM Annual Meeting 2020!

featuring a talk by **Nellie Jo David**



Nellie Jo David is an organizer focusing on indigenous human rights and autonomy on the imposed U.S./Mexico borderlands intersecting the Tohono O’odham Nation. Nellie is from Ajo, Arizona, traditionally Hia-Ced O’odham territory, just West of the Tohono O’odham reservation, just North of Mexico. Nellie was inspired to raise awareness on border issues upon witnessing the increased militarization of her community. She dedicates her work to migrant justice issues and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples, land and wildlife along the border. Nellie obtained (has) her J.D. with a certificate in indigenous law and policy from Michigan State University in 2014.

Saturday, March 28, 2020 10:00 a.m.

Spirit of St Stephen’s Catholic Community
 2201 1st Avenue South in Minneapolis

*Good brunch! Good music! Good speeches! Good friends! Good actions!
 Win raffle prizes! Support WAMM! Support each other!*