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Do Haitian Black Lives Matter to US?

intro by Mary Beaudoin, editor

The struggle against Columbus, plantations, and our cheap clothes and Cokes

From the year 1492 when the rapacious explorer Christopher Columbus first landed, Haiti has struggled against foreign occupations. First claimed by Spain, the island of Hispaniola (as the conquerors named it) was split among two colonial powers in 1697. The eastern part was given to Spain and came to be called the Dominican Republic, and the western part was ceded to France as Saint Domingue, later to be called Haiti.

Under France, hundreds of thousands of people were kidnapped from the African continent and enslaved, forced to work on the plantations of Saint Domingue producing sugar for export,

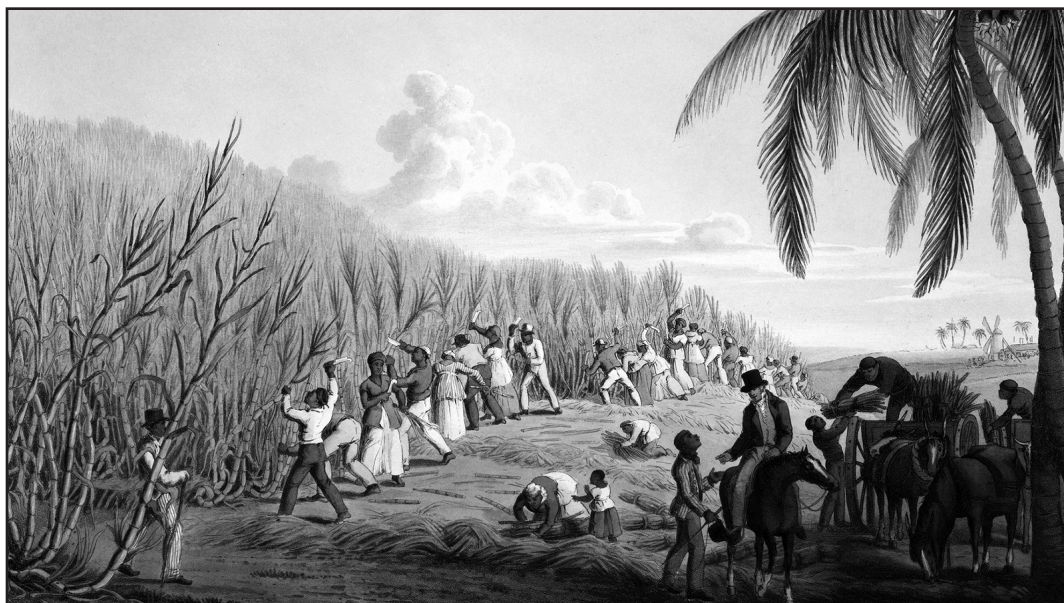
which generated tremendous wealth as a colony. The slaves began to revolt in 1791. They battled the French, British, and Spanish, all of which wanted to secure "the pearl of the Antilles" for their colonial empires. Ultimately, the uprising was so strong among the Black people that they triumphed over all of the foreign powers and, in 1804, formed an independent republic, reviving the name Haiti (the Indigenous Taino's name Ayiti).

The Republic of Haiti has had to struggle to keep itself free of foreign occupation ever since. In 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt extended the Monroe Doctrine warning European powers to stay out of Latin America including the Caribbean, claiming that

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an empire falls, an empires rises

Napoleon lost the wealth-producing French colony of Saint Domingue to the Haitian Revolution. Seeking funding for wars in Europe, he sold off another part of the French empire – a large swath of North American (Indigenous) land. President Thomas Jefferson, a slave plantation owner himself, "bought" it in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 to expand the U.S.



Sugar cane plantation. Based on drawings by William Clark, during a residence of three years in the West Indies (London, 1823)

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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PM: History Lessons

by Polly Mann

I graduated from high school (in 1937), believing that every war in which this country had been involved was a war for justice and that wars were essential, with the United States on the side of justice. Certainly, we fought the British because the British were not living here as we were, and while we might not have been original to the land from the very beginning, we were the first white people here, so, of course, our claim to the soil superseded Britain's. That made all the wars that followed legitimate.

I have long since realized this picture is more than a little skewed – like the way that the four U.S. presidents sculpted into Mount Rushmore are described by the national park devoted to them: “Majestic figures of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln, surrounded by the beauty of the Black Hills of South Dakota, tell the story of the birth, growth, development, and preservation of this country.”

Professor David Vine of the University of California has written a book to set the record straight – *The United States of War: A Global History of America's Endless Conflicts from Columbus to the Islamic State*. Conceived in war from the beginning, the U.S. established military bases or outposts (referred to as “forts”) driving Indigenous people out, claiming territory, and enabling the settlement of European immigrants. Vine sheds light on how the Civil War was used as an excuse to push farther into Indigenous land. One horrific military action was conducted in what are now the states of Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah in 1864: The U.S. Army forced 8,000 Navajos to march 300 miles to Fort Sumner in New Mexico, where they were incarcerated for four years; at least a fourth of them died.

An impressive number of maps in Vine's book illustrate the stages of U.S. expansion. A nation supposedly opposed to empire quickly began building its own



Polly Mann in a dress her mother made for her high school graduation ball, 1937. Hot Springs, Arkansas.

empire overseas, much of it through military force – more recently with the U.S. continuing ‘War on Terror,’ in which thousands of U.S. troops patrol Africa – currently: Chad, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, and South Sudan, plus military positioned to surround Russia, China, and Iran. In the index to his book, Vine lists eight pages of wars, combat, and other combat actions abroad. There have been only two years in the past seven and a half decades when the U.S. was not fighting some designated enemy.

Today Washington controls some 800 to 1,000 U.S. military installations in foreign countries and overseas territories, and we know their purpose isn't peace. This is the footprint of a warring empire.

I'm going to recommend Professor Vine's book so you may be hearing more about the unpeaceful history of the U.S. military.

Polly Mann is a co-founder of WAMM and a regular contributor to this newsletter.

It's Tax Time and More of Your Money for War

by Bill Adamski



The U.S. government has always had an unspeakably colossal focus on trying to maintain unwanted, coercive influence in many countries around the world.

This is done in the unspoken name of hegemony and/or the extraction of resources [often characterized as U.S. “interests”]. It is most evident in the monstrosity of the diversion of U.S. taxpayer money – both in preparing for and in inflicting war and other military interventions on foreign countries.

The Pentagon budget sucks up more than an outrageously outsized 50 percent of the total Fiscal Year 2021 discretionary budget.¹

The entire authorized FY 2021 Pentagon budget – a record \$741 billion – covers base defense costs plus nuclear weapons research (through the Department of Energy and other agencies), and Overseas Contingency Operations for ongoing foreign war costs (mostly in Iraq and Afghanistan).²

The Pentagon justifies the ongoing wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and elsewhere in the Middle East as coming under the 2001 “Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF),” which was passed by Congress reacting hastily and then-President George W. Bush signing it in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. Implementing the AUMF has also been arrogantly named the “Global War On Terror.”

A massive foreign intelligence apparatus supports these overseas invasions through “black budgets” shrouded in mystery. Military intelligence is included in the Pentagon budget (\$23 billion in 2021).³ Additionally, a big part of 18 intelligence agencies within the National Intelligence Program conduct intelligence abroad; nearly \$62 billion was allocated for these agencies in 2021.⁴ According to renowned defense watchdog William Hartung, together

with Mandy Smithberger, (“Making Sense of the \$1.25 Trillion National Security State Budget,” *Pogo/Tom Dispatch*. May 7, 2019):

We know remarkably little about the nature of the nation’s intelligence spending, other than its supposed total, released in a report every year. By now it’s more than \$80 billion. The bulk of the funding, including the CIA and the NSA, is believed to be hidden under obscure line items in the Pentagon budget.⁵

Consequently, we U.S. citizens (indeed, all global residents) need more desperately than ever to demand that our government massively redirect U.S. taxpayer money away from U.S. foreign domination and oppression through wars and other means, and towards supporting human needs in the U.S. and engaging in diplomacy with the world.

Bill Adamski is a member of the WAMM End War Committee and of the St. Joan of Arc WAMM Peacemakers, and is active on peace and justice issues, including regular participation in the Lake St./Marshall Ave. Bridge vigil.

Endnotes

- 1 Congress Overrides Trump Veto of Defense Bill. Defense News/Assoc. Press. January 1, 2021. tinyurl.com/3vkuat3
- 2 Explanations of the breakdown of the U.S. budget can be found at: “U.S. Military Budget, Its Components, Challenges, and Growth.” The Balance. Feb. 11, 2020. tinyurl.com/yrbj72p7 Note: Total mandatory federal spending (\$2.97 trillion) is for social insurance programs paid by the taxpayers – i.e., Social Security, Medicare, unemployment compensation, Medicaid. The Pentagon commands half of \$1.47 trillion discretionary portion of the federal budget. Education, health and human services are funded out of the rest.
- 3 “Secretive Military Intelligence Program Budget Hits Nine Year Spending High.” Aaron Mehta. October 21, 2020. Defense News. tinyurl.com/52bw9prm
- 4 U.S. Intelligence Community Budget. Office of Director of Intelligence. <https://www.dni.gov/index.php/what-we-do/ic-budget>
- 5 <https://tinyurl.com/ye8eva7t>

WAMM Committees

Issues Committees:

- Book Club
- End Domestic Militarism
- End Military Madness Against the Earth
- End War Middle East
- St. Joan of Arc/WAMM Peacemakers
- Second Monday Movies
- Solidarity Committee on the Americas
- Tackling Torture at the Top (T3)

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- Finance
- Fundraising
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- Newsletter
- Personnel
- Program/New Issues
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RESOURCE:

Military Spending Cards for FY2021 on card stock are available in quantity from the WAMM office: 612-827-5364; online at womenagainstmilitary-madness.org

ACTION:

The FY2022 budget is being decided now. Expectations are that it will resemble FY2021. Tell Congress to fund human needs, not war! Cut the Pentagon budget!

Haitian Black Lives Matter,

continued from page 1

the region fell under Washington's "sphere of influence." The U.S. sent in the Marines to occupy Haiti between 1915 and 1934, ostensibly to stabilize the country, but actually to maintain American financial and business interests and to keep Germany away. Decades later, in 1994 under a UN Security Council resolution, 25,000 UN troops entered Haiti. By far the majority were U.S. military from all branches of service sent in to invade and occupy as President Clinton's "Operation Uphold Democracy."

Troops remained until 1996. Under the UN, forces returned to Haiti in 2004. As always, there are interests to enable and guard.

What are these interests? In contemporary terms, they are those of neoliberalism, explained by the online dictionary *Investopedia* as:

the policy that encompasses both politics and economics and seeks to transfer the control of economic factors from the public sector to the private sector. Many neoliberalism policies enhance the workings of free-market capitalism and attempt to place limits on government spending, government regulation, and public ownership.

The policies of neoliberalism are accelerated with what economist Naomi Klein calls the "shock doctrine" which is imposed on a country when it finds itself in dire straits and is forced to go into debt as a form of bondage to international financial institutions. The beleaguered nation also must accept related economic conditions. Haitian-American writer Edwidge Danticat in 2010 described how "disaster capitalism" took advantage of the cataclysmic earthquake in Haiti:

U.S. elites with both the Bush and now the Obama administrations have used social and natural crises to continue and expand the U.S.'s neoliberal economic plans. In close collaboration with the new UN Special Envoy to Haiti, former President Bill Clinton, Obama has continued to push for an economic program familiar to much of the rest of the Caribbean – tourism, textile sweatshops, and weakening of state control of the economy through privatization and deregulation.

President Biden's policies toward Haiti remain to be seen, but St. John's University political science professor Gary Prevost expects that veteran diplomat Roberta Jacobson, appointed as Undersecretary of State for the Western Hemisphere, will likely follow positions like those of Clinton and Obama. Prevost notes that National Security Council

advisor for Latin America, Juan Gonzales, has no particular track record on Haiti.

A key aspect of neoliberalism is that of the free-trade agreements, which have rocked the economies of both the U.S. and Haiti, and have decimated the livelihoods of many U.S. workers, while having a terrible effect on Haitians. A free-trade zone exists geographically within a country but acts as a special economic area exempt from laws that normally regulate imports, exports, and production. Foreign corporations that choose to set up in a free-trade zone are tax exempt, thus benefiting themselves and the enabling elites of the host nation, but depriving that nation's economy, exploiting the people's labor and resources, as well as causing environmental destruction.

The article and statement that follow reveal the struggles of the Haiti people against foreign meddling

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The Linen Market at St. Domingo. Engraved print of a painting by Agostino Brunias, published by John P. Thompson (London), October 6, 1804 depicts pre-sweatshop textile trading.

Haitian Black Lives Matter,

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– especially from the U.S., and free trade. These struggles are exemplified by the work of a group of courageous women: Haitian Women in Solidarity (SOFA), who are resisting the effects of the free-trade zones and neoliberal policies that are affecting their lives.

Update: While Haitians are protesting violent injustices, Biden has shown hostility to Haitian immigration with deportations. He even used Trump’s

tactic of tweeting to announce that immigrants (who also happen to be people of color) are not welcome in the U.S., while at the same time filling official appointments with women and people of color.

ACTION:

Demand U.S. officials act to halt Haitian immigrant deportations, and interference in Haiti.

A free trade zone means Haitians are forced to produce stevia for our “natural” sweetener drinks and clothes for Gap (pictured).



Peasant Farmers Protest: Free Trade Isn’t Free for Haitian Women

by Sabine Lamour and Mamyrah Dougé-Prosper

Note: Haitians speak of themselves as “peasants”: descendants of enslaved and maroon (escaped) Africans who fought back against the plantation system by farming small plots of land they organized into collectives.

March 29, 2021 marked the International Day of Solidarity with Haiti when friends and allies around the world were called to stand with Haiti against U.S. interference, multinational corporate exploitation, and savage capitalism.

Feminist organic farming versus Coca-Cola

On February 22, 2021, Solidarite Fanm Ayisyèn – Haitian Women in Solidarity (SOFA) issued a statement denouncing the presidential decree rendering over 21,250 acres of protected agricultural lands in the north of the country into a free trade zone. Note that a free trade zone is tax exempt for 15 years.

SOFA controlled 32 acres in the Savane Diane region in the north of Haiti, on which the feminist collec-

tive runs an agricultural school and organic farm for local consumption. Accordingly, the collective protested the establishment of a plantation to produce a single crop, stevia, for export to be transformed into a sweetener for Coca-Cola soft drinks.¹

SOFA took the opportunity to call out Haitian President Jovenel Moïse not only for exceeding his term in office, which ended on February 7, 2021, but also for gifting inhabited and food-producing lands to multinational corporations. In fact, Moïse provided \$18 million in state subsidies to the local industrialist André Apaid to start the stevia plantation.

Appropriately, the feminists denounced the industrial capitalist for employing local young men, who were armed, to forcibly remove them from the farm. And finally, SOFA pointed out the complicity of the “international community” in supporting these land grabs.

A framework for exploitation in a landmark year

SOFA’s denunciation of Apaid is historical. It is after all the latter’s

Groupe des 184 that led the second ouster of popular President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 2004 – three years into his five-year term. Ironically, the year marking the bicentennial of the 1804 Haitian Revolution, which established independence from enslavement by colonial powers, saw contemporary actors set up a framework of exploitation by foreign powers working with local elites:

- Groupe des 184, a number of whose leaders are involved in the import/export business and owners of assembly plants, was organized with help from the United States.²
- United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which occupied the country from 2004 until 2017, was lobbied for by Apaid. Since 2004, when MINUSTAH landed in Haiti, SOFA and other feminist and human rights organizations documented and decried its violations: murders in vulnerable neighborhoods, collective rapes of women and children, and the spread of cholera.

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Farmers Protest,

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- the Core Group composed of representatives of the U.S., Canada, France, Brazil, Spain, Germany, the European Union, the Organization of American States, and the United Nations. It was formed to fund Haitian civil society to intervene in national politics including announcing elections, and to direct development plans for the country including suppressing minimum wages.

The earthquake, embezzlement, a sweatshop and a banana plantation

SOFA's confrontation with Moïse is rooted in the organization's critique of his predecessor President Joseph Michel Martelly, founder of the Parti Haitien Tèt Kale (PHTK), who ascended to power after the 2010 earthquake when the U.S. embassy essentially declared him the victor. With the assistance of the Clintons, Martelly's government transferred reconstruction funds (humanitarian donations and loans) to subsidize the establishment of a free trade zone on agricultural lands in the North of the country. The Caracol Industrial Park, with a sweatshop that produces clothes for Walmart, Gap, Zara and other companies (while polluting water sources), was built here.

Martelly also delayed parliamentary elections to rule by decree. He verbally attacked militant women who questioned his authority and rewarded state officials accused of sexual assault. And he allowed for the embezzlement of more than \$2 billion of Venezuela's PetroCaribe funds earmarked for infrastructure and social programs like housing. Martelly gifted Moïse some of these funds to set up his own free trade zone Agritrans, a banana plantation.

"Next after God" Moïse and state terrorism

The Haitian people continually rejected Martelly. And their protests swelled after Moïse stole the 2015 election – with more than 44 percent of the ballots cast for him by *deceased* voters. An interim government took over to placate the Haitian people for 2016 and to organize new sham elections. Moïse was eventually inaugurated in 2017 and, as soon as he took over, reinstated the Haitian Armed Forces and further militarized the police to repress demonstrators.

Ninety-five out of 117 armed gangs controlled the capitol of Haiti, kidnapping, murdering, and raping the people. The link between the state and the gangs was clearly authenticated by the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) in an investigative report³ on the 2018 collective rape of 11 women and the massacre of 71 residents in La Saline, an impoverished neighborhood in Port-au-Prince, known for its resistance to *organized* abandonment by the state (failure to provide infrastructure).

SOFA and other Haitian human rights activists asserted that these acts of terror were committed to deter the people from demanding accounts on the PetroCaribe funds. Moïse also delayed parliamentary elections, preventing the necessary quorum for the legislative branch to check and balance him. Since January 2020, President Moïse rules alone by decree. In fact, that year, he declared himself the most important being on the island *after God!* And, under the watchful and approving eye of the Core Group, the now de facto president Moïse organizes for a new constitution that would allow him to run in the next presidential elections, a strategic interdiction of the one placed in the Constitution of 1987 to *prevent* dictatorship.

The resistance of women in solidarity

February 22, 2021 marked the 35th anniversary of Solidarite Fanm Ayisyèn [Haitian Women in Solidarity (SOFA)], founded in 1986 by women who had organized in Haiti in solidarity with diasporic feminists in the United States and Canada against the 29-year dictatorship of the Duvalier regime. Feminist organizations ensured the participation of women in the drafting of the Constitution of 1987, a document that symbolizes the Haitian people's aspirations to collective self-determination and a turn to an inclusive vision of the nation. And, in the three-year transition to prepare for the first free elections since 1957, SOFA launched a campaign of conscientization⁴ about violence against women.

The struggle of women, they said, is the struggle of the people. When the U.S. supported the first coup d'état against President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1991, and, in the place of his government, installed a military/paramilitary dictatorship, SOFA and other feminists relied on their international allies to bring to light the collective murders and rapes of people who had dared to dream of democracy and better living conditions. It is this international solidarity that facilitated Haiti's return to constitutional order in 1994.

War against the Haitian people continues

However, the actions and inactions of the current PHTK government constitute a continued war against the Haitian people by all possible means:

- Kidnappings, racketeering, massacres, murders, rapes, and collective rapes, all under the watchful eyes of the police.

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Farmers Protest,

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- Violent land grabs from peasants into the hands of Haitian industrialists, for production of exports, and for profit.

These acts of terror attempt to break the resolve of the people who protest the corrupt government of Moïse, damage human relations in society and demobilize organizations of people fighting for the collective good.

Stand with Haitians for self determination!

Today, the Haitian people call on their friends and allies to stand with

them. SOFA's statement of protestation, which follows, exposes how interwoven the dictatorship of Haiti is with U.S. imperialism and savage capitalism.

Mamyrah Dougé-Prosper is an Assistant Professor of Global and International Studies at the University of California, Irvine. She is also the International Coordinator of the Pan-African Solidarity Network with Community Movement Builders. Sabine Lamour is a sociologist trained in France and Haiti currently researching the role of the Evangelical Church in politics. She is a feminist activist, independent consultant, national coordinator of

Solidarite Fanm Ayisyèn (SOFA), and instructor at l'Université d'État d'Haiti (UEH).

Endnotes

- 1 Stevia has become popular in the West as a low-calorie, natural sweetener substitute for sugar in processed foods. It is frequently used in combination with chemical ingredients.
- 2 "Group 184, a ruling class front," Haiti Support Group <https://haitisupportgroup.org/group-ruling-class-front>
- 3 The United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/lacregion/pages/htindex.aspx>; <https://binuh.unmissions.org/en/press-release-haiti-un-issues-report-gang-violence-port-au-prince>
- 4 The concept of Latin American popular education originally developed by Brazilian Paulo Freire to raise awareness of oppression.

excerpts from: Statement of Solidarite Fanm Ayisyèn [Haitian Women in Solidarity (SOFA)]

Solidarite Fanm Ayisyèn [Haitian Women in Solidarity (SOFA)] rejects the presidential decree of February 8, 2021 which makes Savane Diane a Free Trade Zone.

Let it be known for truth and for history:

Women peasantry, members of SOFA, have 13 hectares [approximately 32 acres] of land granted in 2017 by the Haitian State through the Ministry of Agriculture (MARNDR) and the National Vocational Training Institute (INARA). These 13 hectares, intended for organic farming, had been made available to our organization to reinforce the farm of SOFA's Délicia Jean School of Organic Agriculture in Saint-Michel de L'Attalaye.

From 2017 to 2020, SOFA had trained more than 240 women in organic farming, including innovative techniques allowing them to obtain a better yield for food crops in the Artibonite region.

By suspending the protocol and denying us the usufruct [appropriate

use] of the land, the minister pawned the spring campaign of the Délicia Jean Feminist Farm School that empowered young women in the area to fight against food insecurity. Our work had already yielded a harvest of 350 pecks (approximately 1,000 pounds) of pigeon peas in the first year alone, to be redistributed for use as seeds to SOFA members throughout the town of Saint-Michel de l'Attalaye and to other farmers who had participated in the production, and 200 pecks (approximately 600 pounds) of peanuts, in addition to a large amount of okra seeds.

Due to the agricultural importance of Savane Diane [a large fertile plain] in 2018, the Ministry of Agriculture ranked it among the five priority areas guaranteeing the food self-sufficiency of Haiti. However, to our astonishment on February 8, 2021, the former president, who won the elections on the basis of the speech that he was going to feed the entire population, together with the former Minister of Agriculture, who is paid

by the population to define strategies in order to achieve this objective, instead announced a decision to create a free trade zone for an export crop.

SOFA wants to draw attention to this measure, which hinders the country's future possibility of providing food for its citizens. The overall goal of free trade zones is to produce for the outside world. Added to this, these types of businesses don't pay taxes to customs and the DGI (the nation's tax collection agency) for 15 years, creating a major shortfall for an impoverished country. The purpose of the specific concession addressed here is to make room for the production of stevia to make a sweetener for use in Coca-Cola. SOFA wonders if Mr. Apaid [Andrew Apaid, a Haitian industrial capitalist who is taking the land for the production of stevia] should always position himself as the gravedigger of the Republic so as to benefit from the vulnerabilities of the collective population of Haitians in each major crisis.

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Excerpts,

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The largest hilltop lake in the country sits in the middle of Savane Diane and covers 14 hectares (approximately 34 acres), the equivalent of 14 soccer fields. This lake produces fish for local residents for food and trade. The lake also is used for irrigation of the land and to provide livestock with water.

The introduction of the stevia factory in anticipation of supplying Coca-Cola, comes without any social compensation for Haitians. In other words, this system reinforces food insecurity in Haiti and the impoverishment of the country, including the outrageous feminization of poverty.

In sum, declaring Savane Diane a free trade zone will:

- destroy the region's biodiversity by switching from pluri-culture to monoculture
- force the abandonment of organic farming in favor of intensive industrial farming likely to poison the environment, the land, livestock, and water table
- replace one of the largest regions that supplies food to Haiti with a plantation for the production of export commodities
- condemn the country to import more processed products that will harm the health of the Haitian people, especially the sexual and reproductive health of women
- increase the cost of food which will increase maternal and child malnutrition because we will need more dollars to import products
- force citizens of the Central Plateau, the North, and Artibonite regions to leave the countryside to go work in the sugar cane fields of the Dominican Republic or to become boat people and expose their lives to the risks associated

with poor sea travel conditions – or seek a pittance working in the stevia industry

Lè nen pran kou, je kouri dlo. (When the nose is struck, tears flow from the eyes.)

When local agricultural production of the Central Plateau, the North, and Artibonite regions disappear and is replaced by stevia, many more Haitians will experience the pangs of misery from induced poverty, and the entire population will pay the consequences, including women from the most impoverished sections of society. The activities implemented by SOFA through its farm school that aimed at strengthening agriculture in Saint-Michel can no longer be continued. Thus, the weakening of Haitian civil society by the State, with the help of the international and the local elites, will be more visible.

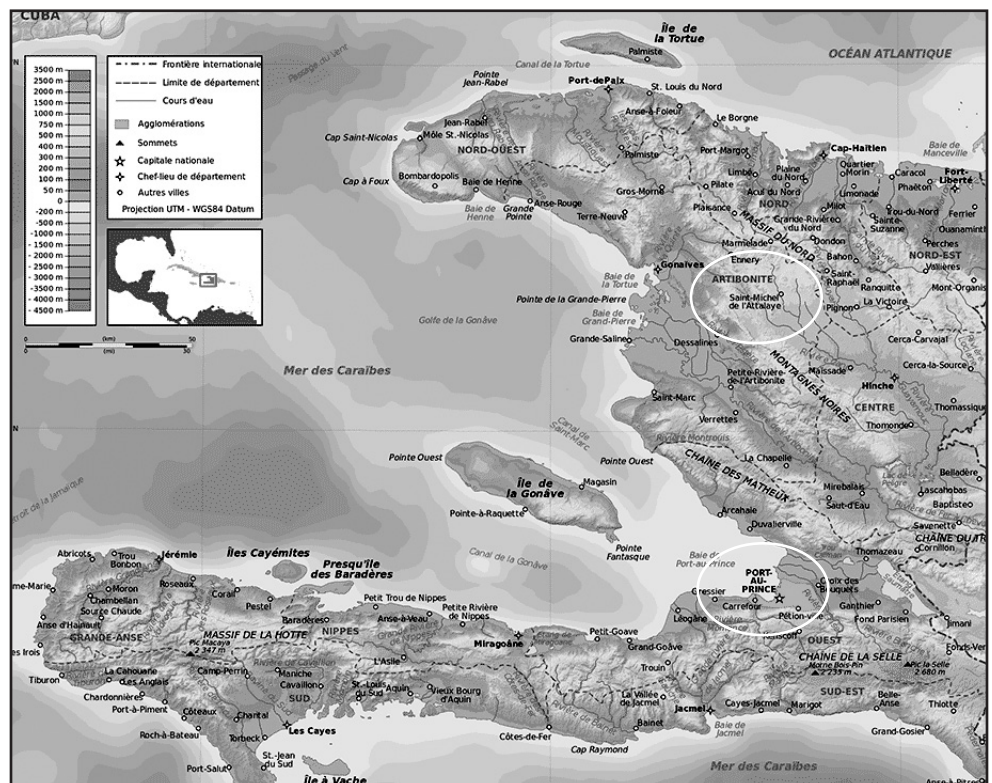
On February 7, 2020, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) classified

Haiti as a country of urgent food insecurity. Haiti then counted 3.7 million food insecure people. The FAO predicted that if no action was taken by March 2020, that number would rise to over 4.1 million. A year later, on February 8, 2021, as the situation worsens, the current state authorities of the country, accompanied by industrialists, appear to want to drive the population into hunger and misery.

All Haitian people must say no to the decree of former President Moïse, adopted after the end of his term and aimed at expelling farming families from the land that they cultivate for the benefit of a whole population. This decree only sows desolation and disarray in the country. We, the members of SOFA, firmly believe that all people must say no to this ferocious and arbitrary measure.

The struggle of women is the struggle of the Haitian people!

Sabine Lamour
Coordonnatrice générale SOFA



Map of Haiti: Saint-Michel de l'Atalaye (top circle) is the location of SOFA'S Délicia Jean School of Organic Agriculture in Savane Diane

End Military Madness Against the Earth!

by Sue Ann Martinson

In our society and culture, militarism touches us in endless ways and is intimately linked to the most important issues of our day: the climate crisis and environmental degradation. In addition, militarism uses the billions of dollars required to maintain a global empire – money that could have provided for human needs, including pandemic relief.

To address these issues, it is necessary to have an understanding of the role militarism plays not only with war itself, but by fossil fuel consumption and the polluting of water, air, and land worldwide.

Many groups are already working on the issue of climate change and environmental degradation – yet the major groups do not include the effects of the military in their analyses or activism, nor are they likely to anytime soon. Why is that? It may be that, as Veteran for Peace Will Griffin (Iraq, Afghanistan) says in his Peace Report, “most Americans are taught to believe certain myths about the worldwide network of U.S. military bases: They are an obvious good, a way to spread democracy, and are essential to national security and global peace.” Most people are unaware that the results are the opposite.

Among the problems created by military bases, wars, and military actions:

- Agent Orange: a carcinogenic defoliant used extensively for visibility in the U.S. war on Vietnam
- burn pits: huge fire pits used to dispose of trash, including chemicals, on military bases – also used to dispose of detritus and debris, including metals and other toxins, when leaving battle grounds
- depleted uranium munitions: highly toxic and carcinogenic,



manufactured from nuclear waste, and used extensively in bullets, tanks, etc., in U.S. wars primarily in Iraq, causing birth defects in children through land and water pollution

- unrestored superfund sites: heavily contaminated sites not fully cleaned up, many of them military; several in Minnesota
- oil wars: perpetuating dependence on fossil fuels and creating more pollution and contaminants, while threatening and destroying foreign countries
- the Pentagon's massive carbon footprint: the U.S. military is the greatest polluter of fossil fuel in the world
- drinking water contamination: PFAS, a toxic flame retardant that seeps into ground water, is used widely in U.S. bases, internationally and nationally, including at Minnesota's Camp Ripley
- climate altering warfare: weather modification for military purposes developed as part of a new genera-

tion of sophisticated electromagnetic weapons capabilities

- the United States Space Force: expanding warfare into space will bring ozone depletion, nuclear contamination, and radioactive debris threatening the earth.

More detailed information about these topics is available from the WAMM office in the pdf form of a slideshow.

ACTION:

For these reasons, Women Against Military Madness (WAMM) needs a committee to educate about the connection between the military and the environment and to act for positive change. Interested in joining WAMM's End Military Madness Against the Earth Committee (EMMAE)? Call the WAMM office at 612-827-5364 or email general@wamm.me. A Zoom meeting will be arranged soon.

Sue Ann Martinson is a long-time WAMM member. She maintains her own independent blog, Rise Up Times.

Militarism Comes Home

Barbed wire and moats. Military-style barricades at the Hennepin County Government Center keep the citizenry away from the trial of Derek Chauvin, the policeman who killed George Floyd. It's been reported that the city of Minneapolis could be spending up to one million dollars or more on fortifying government buildings and police precincts. – *Kim DeFranco*



Photo: Kim DeFranco

RESOURCE/ACTION:

See “Police Militarization” on Women Against Military Madness Youtube channel: tinyurl.com/xuu4b35e and watch WAMM calendar online for actions called by WAMM’s End Domestic Militarism Committee.

Biden’s “Counterterrorism”

by Polly Mann

Biden’s word for his foreign policy is “counterterrorism,” which implies business as usual: troops all over the world and billions for the arms industry, and for the targeted nation – destruction and loss of lives. A recent study by the UN Development Program found that the final straw that draws 70 percent of people into conflicts is the killing or detention of a family member by so-called

counterterrorists or security forces. The study exposes the U.S. brand of military counterterrorism as a self-perpetuating cycle of violence that generates and replenishes an endless pool of “terrorists” as it destroys families, communities, and countries. If the Biden administration truly wants to stop funding chaos and terrorism, it must radically transform its

role in supporting terrorism, spreading chaos, and creating false pretexts for war and hostility. Ending aggression and using diplomacy instead would be a start.

Polly Mann is a co-founder of WAMM and a regular contributor to this newsletter. See her column on page 2.

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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

Wear masks and practice social distancing! Every Wednesday, 5:00 to 6:00 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

Wear masks and practice social distancing! Every Friday, 4:00 to 5:00 p.m., corner of Summit Avenue and Snelling Avenue, St. Paul. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Peace Vigil

Wear masks and practice social distancing! 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

Wear masks and practice social distancing! 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.

Wear masks and practice social distancing! 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

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

Wear masks and practice social distancing! 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 via Zoom, 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Book Club

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

End Domestic Militarism

Every other Monday via Zoom, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. FFI: 612-827-5364.

End Military Madness Against the Earth

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

End War

First Monday of every month via Zoom, 6:00 p.m. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Middle East

Second Monday of every month via Zoom, 10:00 a.m. FFI: 612-827-5364.

St. Joan of Arc/ WAMM Peacemakers

Fourth Tuesday of every month via Zoom, 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. FFI: Call Barbara 612-722-4444 or Bill 612-926-8459.

Solidarity Committee on the Americas (SCOTA)

Every Thursday via Zoom, 10:00 a.m. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Tackling Torture at the Top (T3)

Second Wednesday of every month via Zoom, 10:00 a.m. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Ongoing Events

Grandmothers for Peace

First Wednesday of every month, 12:45 p.m. via Zoom. Justice issue programs for understanding our role in changing systems. FFI: 701-260-7566.

Middle East Peace Now

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

WAMM Second Monday at the Movies

During the pandemic, we are no longer screening movies. However, the Movie Committee is posting links to important movies available on line. Check WAMM's Calendar and Facebook page for details. FFI 612-827-5364.

Special Events

Access Zoom events through the Women Against Military Madness Calendar at womenagainstmilitarymadness.org and Women Against Military Madness Facebook. All events on CST zone.

Announcements

Walk Against Weapons

Saturday, June 5, 2021. Line up at 11 a.m. at the Main Beach, Lake Nokomis, 4955 West Lake Nokomis Parkway in Minneapolis. See ad on back page!

The First 100 Days: "Money for Human Needs Not War!" Campaign

continues to send a message each day on Facebook and Instagram during Biden's first 100 days in office. Please like and share these posts! Sponsored by WAMM End War Committee.

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Walk to Ban Nuclear Weapons; Walk to End the Madness
***Speak out! Take action! Demand that our government ratify
the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons!***

Saturday, June 5, 2021 – Rain or Shine

WALK SCHEDULE (NOTE NEW LOCATION!):

10:30 a.m. – Check-in at Main Beach, Lake Nokomis,
4955 West Lake Nokomis Parkway in Minneapolis

11:00 a.m. – Walk begins; 3 mile stroll around
Lake Nokomis (short route available)

Noon – Closing Rally at Main Beach Parking Lot

**Would you like to walk or sponsor a walker? Come as an individual, form a team or
join an existing team. Call the W.A.M.M. office 612-827-5364 for more information!**

