



W.A.M.M. NEWSLETTER

Women Against Military Madness

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Women Against Military Madness

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19 years after the U.S. invasion of Iraq:

Say NO to U.S. Wars

No War with Russia

**End endless U.S. wars:
Iraq, Syria, Iran, Yemen
No war Everywhere!**

**Funds for housing,
health care, COVID relief,
not the Pentagon**

**Wars abroad
militarize society:
Stop police violence!**



“Guernica” by Pablo Picasso (1937) depicts the effects of aerial bombing on civilians. Poster designed by Kristin Dooley for March 19, 2022 antiwar rally, Minneapolis.

On the 19th anniversary of the 2003 devastating U.S. war on Iraq, peace-loving people rallied in cities and towns around the nation to protest endless U.S. wars. The rallies at this time especially focused on the current U.S./NATO war with Russia, in which Ukraine serves as a proxy. At the same time that we oppose this war in whatever way we can, we don't forget that there have been other wars in which

the U.S. has been active. This issue of our newsletter is a fresh reminder of some of these other wars and a glimpse into the catastrophic effect they have had on people's lives. We are also reminded that while the national treasury is tragically used to kill and destroy in other countries, it could have been used to supply unmet human needs within our own country such as affordable housing, healthcare, and education.



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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Afghanistan

How easily we forget the conflicts our own government creates. Afghanistan is facing a crisis of unparalleled proportions. This is a consequence of harsh U.S. sanctions including a freeze on nearly \$10 billion in Afghanistan's Central Bank reserves, \$7 billion of that in U.S. banks.¹ Tragically, more Afghan civilians could die now than during the past 20 years of war. Norwegian Refugee Council chief Jan Egeland explained, "It is now, paradoxically, the Western sanctions that are our main problem in saving lives in Afghanistan."

Twenty years ago, the U.S. invaded and occupied Afghanistan to the tune of trillions and stayed in the "Graveyard of Empires" far longer than the Soviets. Our military bombed hospitals, schools, and residential areas in that sovereign nation, causing millions of civilians to die and suffer. Afghans now face starvation, but instead the sole focus is on refugees fleeing Ukraine. Of course, we should care about refugees of war everywhere, but not without looking long and hard in the mirror at our own imperialist background, understanding that which the U.S. has touched militarily post-WWII has consistently left a trail of death and destruction in its wake.

To add insult to injury, the Biden administration has proposed to confiscate the \$7 billion in frozen funds currently held in U.S. banks, giving half to a humanitarian aid trust fund and half to families of 9/11 victims, instead of returning it all to the banking system.² Numerous international law experts see this as a dangerous precedent, using half of the funds to award U.S. citizens and the other half for a vague "trust fund" with no details of how those funds would be managed or distributed. This cynical theft proposed by the U.S. government is causing the single most devastating year in Afghanistan's recorded history,

by Kristina Gronquist



*The list of countries the U.S. has bombed since WWII (may not be comprehensive).
Graphic: Soap Box*

already one of the world's poorest countries. The only right course of action is to lift U.S. sanctions and release all the Central Bank's funds.

In addition to returning their funds to the Afghans, the U.S. should add more funding for war reparations to offset all the harm our military inflicted. These measures would rescue the economy from ruin and allow families to have desperately needed food, medicine, and firewood. At this critical juncture, we must not turn our eyes away from the impending humanitarian catastrophe that Afghans are facing.

Endnotes

- 1 "Afghanistan Central Bank Reserves," Congressional Research Report, February 23, 2022, tinyurl.com/2p99752a
- 2 Julie Hollar, "Biden's Multi-Billion Afghan Theft Gets Scant Mention on TV News," February 15, 2022, Fair, tinyurl.com/2tvu5jzv

Endless U.S. Wars

The following pages of *Endless U.S. Wars* by Newsletter staff and committee.

What follows is by no means a comprehensive list, but a glimpse at some of the other wars in which the U.S. has been engaged.

Somalia

As usual, the U.S. public is told that our nation is helping other nations by fighting endemic post-9/11 terrorism, but U.S. policy is such that it only pours oil on fires that it started.

U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) conducted five air strikes in Somalia under Biden, including one on February 22. Of the latest air strike, AFRICOM stated: “The command’s initial assessment is that no civilians were killed or injured” but in the same paragraph, it also says that “a battle damage assessment is still pending.”¹

David Sternman of the think tank New America expressed concern that AFRICOM was moving away from providing numbers of casualties and damage in its air strikes. On March 1, 2022, he provided an update: “We now have an answer to how many people AFRICOM assesses were killed in the February 22 strike in Somalia. In response to an email inquiry from New America, AFRICOM said that it assessed that ‘three al Shabaab terrorists were killed as a result of the strike.’”²

Of course, there are still many, many questions about another drone strike in Somalia that AFRICOM’s public relations will not answer. People of peace believe that not only should there be more disclosure, but there should be *no* air strikes, and *no* AFRICOM, which is the U.S. weaponized attempt to control the continent of Africa. And we aren’t fooled by the fact that it has incorporated some African actors within its mission.

But tragically, the U.S. continues to set its sights on Somalia. Dave DeCamp

reported March 10 on antiwar.com that “the Pentagon wants Biden to put the commandos that are in Djibouti and Kenya back into Somalia to train government troops, and officials told the *Journal* [*Wall Street Journal*] that they expect Biden will agree to their request. ‘I believe we will be given permission in the near term to be able to have a more persistent presence in Somalia,’ a military official said.”³

Increasing U.S. military involvement will harm, not help, a nation already under enormous stress. On February 15, briefers at the UN Security Council had warned that Somalia was at a “critical juncture amid potential humanitarian catastrophe, a spike in terrorism-related violence, growing food insecurity, climate shocks and long overdue elections.”⁴

Endnotes

- 1 Press release: “Somalia: U.S. forces engage insurgents in support of the federal government of Somalia,” United States Africa Command. tinyurl.com/5224rkwy
- 2 David Sternman, “Another Strike in Somalia, How Many People Did It Kill?”, New America, February 24, 2022. tinyurl.com/d46frc4y
- 3 “The Pentagon Is Urging Biden to Send Hundreds of Troops to Somalia,” March 10, 2022, antiwar.com, tinyurl.com/297fzyta
- 4 “Somalia at Critical Juncture, Must Have International Support in Order to Hold Overdue Elections, Restore Stability, Briefers Tell Security Council,” United Nations Coverage and Press Releases, February 15, 2022. tinyurl.com/n7d5ezpd



WAMM Committees

Action Groups:

- End Domestic Militarism
- End Military Madness Against the Earth
- End War
- Middle East
- St. Joan of Arc/WAMM Peacemakers
- Movies
- Solidarity Committee on the Americas

Standing Committees:

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- Finance
- Fundraising
- Membership/Outreach
- Newsletter
- Personnel
- Program/New Issues
- Silent Auction

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Yemen

The seven-year war in Yemen has created the world's largest humanitarian crisis, as well as the largest outbreak of cholera in modern history. 400,000 children under five years of age are in danger of starving to death, according to UN reports. The Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation (YRRF) says that 80 percent of the population is in need of humanitarian aid; more than 20 million people are food insecure; 14 million are in acute need; three million have been displaced; 70 percent of children don't have access to clean water and sanitation; over 10 million children don't have enough food to eat.¹ Along with disruption of agriculture, is the inability to obtain food aid and fuel due to restrictions on ships entering Yemen's ports.

How can the U.S. government and its allies continue with this heartless, abominable war in Yemen? Geo-political analysts explained:

The Yemeni archipelago of Socotra in the Indian Ocean is 380 kilometers south of the Yemeni coastline . . . Socotra is at the crossroads of the strategic naval waterways of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Among Washington's strategic objectives is the militarization of major seaways. This strategic waterway links the Mediterranean to South Asia and the Far East through the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. It is a major transit route for oil tankers. A large share of China's industrial exports to Western Europe transits through this strategic waterway. Maritime trade from East and Southern Africa to Western Europe also transits within proximity of Socotra, through the Gulf of

Aden and the Red Sea . . .

Also: The Bab Al-Mandeb strait on Yemen's border is an important strategic chokepoint for international maritime trade and energy shipments.²

Between 2017 and 2021, exports of major arms by the U.S. to Saudi Arabia increased by 106 percent.³

There was hope that the horror would end when last year, a bill passed in Congress calling for the suspension of the U.S. sustainment and maintenance support to Saudi air force units responsible for airstrikes resulting in civilian casualties in Yemen. However, a giant loophole in the bill allows "certain exemptions for territorial self-defense, counterterrorism operations, and defense of U.S. government facilities of personnel." Antiwar.com says, "Calling the coalition 'Saudi-led' obscures the essential roles that the United States, United Kingdom, and United Arab Emirates play in waging the war . . . The Saudi coalition carried out at least 200 air raids and up to 716 individual airstrikes in Yemen in February 2022."

ACTION:

Tell Congress to introduce a New War Powers Resolution for Yemen.

The Capitol switchboard will connect you to your congressional representatives and senators: 202-224-3121.

MORE INFO:

"Impact of War and Blockade on Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen 2015 – Present,"

from the Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation. Graphics, stats, and photos in a slideshow. Available to watch on the Middle East Committee, Women Against Military Madness website. tinyurl.com/2ad6sf4c Copies available free for personal or group use. Call the WAMM office at 612-827-5364.

Guide to the War Powers Act and how it relates to Yemen. Friends Committee on National Legislation. tinyurl.com/4s6wh5nf

Endnotes

- 1 Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation, yemenfoundation.org
- 2 "Why the U.S. Support for the War on Yemen? Location, Location, Location," Women Against Military Madness Newsletter, page 5, Fall II, 2018. tinyurl.com/bj7zv8m7
- 3 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. March 14, 2022. tinyurl.com/2p8ryd3j

Impact of War on Population

- 24.3 million people are in need
 - 14.4 million in acute need
- Over 4 million people are displaced
 - 80% displaced for over a year.
 - Women and children 79% of the displaced
- Over 16 million people are food insecure.
- 15 million people (1/2 are children) do not have access to safe water, sanitation, or hygiene.
- GDP has dropped 40% since 2015.

Graphic: Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation (yemenfoundation.org)

Palestine

Why is the U.S. considered part of a low-intensity war on Palestine? The Israeli military occupation of Palestine is enabled by the U.S. “nothing can come between us” political support and gifts of \$3.8 billion per year.¹ In addition, U.S. shares military equipment and technology, and engages in joint military exercises with Israel.

In February 2022, Amnesty International released a report, “Israel’s Apartheid Against Palestinians: Cruel System of Domination and Crime Against Humanity”² that has caused reverberations around the world. *Electronic Intifada*, which reports on Palestinian issues, remarked: “Israel is doubling down on its apartheid rule over Palestinians while it and its international accomplices [France, among them] attempted to fend off the label.”

On March 10, the Knesset, Israel’s governing body, passed the Citizenship Law denying naturalization and arrangements for residency and permits to Palestinian spouses married to Israelis. The 2022 ban also pertains to spouses from Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, and Syria. This ban on family unification is part of demographic engineering efforts to ensure a Jewish majority in the territory of historic Palestine. According to the Israeli news media, *Haartzet*, Foreign Minister Yair Lapid said last year: “We don’t need to hide from the substance of the Citizenship Law. It’s one of the tools aimed at ensuring a Jewish majority in Israel.”³

The Palestinian news agency *Wafa* reported on March 14, “Israeli occupation forces today and last night detained 16 Palestinians from various parts of the occupied territories, according to local and Palestinian security

sources.”⁴ On March 21, the *Palestinian Chronicle* reported “speaking to *Wafa*, the mosque director, Ghassan Al-Rajabi, said ‘Suddenly the Israeli occupation forces raided the Ibrahim Mosque, went upstairs and prevented Palestinian worshippers from entering it.’”⁵

The ethnic cleansing that is killing Palestinians one at a time has also intensified. According to the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights: “IOF [Israeli Occupation Forces] murder-crimes against Palestinian civilians, particularly children, have been on the rise, including the use of snipers and direct shooting to kill, harm, and cause severe injuries . . . Since the beginning of 2022, IOF murdered 8 Palestinians, including 2 children, and wounded 47 others, including 8 children and 4 journalists; all of them are residents of the West Bank.”

Endnotes

- 1 “U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel,” Congressional Research Service, February 18, 2022. tinyurl.com/ym9ehu2d
- 2 “Israel’s Apartheid Against Palestinians: Cruel System of Domination and Crime Against Humanity,” Amnesty International. tinyurl.com/yck75fdk
- 3 Noah Shpigel, “Explainer: Israel Just Re-banned Palestinian Family Unification Law. What Does This Law Do and How Can It Be Fought?,” *Haartzet*, March 12, 2022. tinyurl.com/mvjee6xa
- 4 “Israeli Occupation Forces Detain 16 Palestinians from the Occupied Territories,” March 14, 2022. tinyurl.com/2p84cc4u
- 5 “Israeli Soldiers Raid Ibrahim Mosque in Hebron,” *The Palestine Chronicle*, March 21, 2022. tinyurl.com/2p8kh97h



Misinformation Watch: “USA Today reported that a photo that went viral about a high-rise in Ukraine being hit by Russian bombing turned out to be a high-rise from the Gaza Strip, demolished by the Israeli Air Force in May 2021.” – Ilan Pappé, March 13, 2022 Photo: Mahmoud Ajjour, *The Palestine Chronicle*

Libya

In 2011, when the U.S.-instigated and NATO-conducted bombing war was over, and Libyan leader Muammar Ghaddafi had been brutally murdered, then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, an architect of the war, laughed and famously cried out, “We came, we saw, he died!” Subsequently, there was never found to be any truth to the rationale provided to the American public about Libyan leader Muammar Ghaddafi planning mass murder of the Libyan civilians, necessitating a “humanitarian” intervention (via a no-fly zone and NATO bombing). Obama has not expressed regret for the war, but has said multiple times that he regards “failure to plan for what came *after* the war on Libya” as the worst mistake of his presidency.

Obama was *sooooo* wrong about bombing Libya. Prior to the bombing, Libya had the highest standard of living on the African continent; healthcare and education were free and there was an abundant social safety structure. The World Food Programme, which assists food vulnerable and insecure people, reports that since 2011, Libya has experienced “persistent insecurity and instability.” It is now so impoverished that “many households are struggling to meet their basic needs.”¹

On March 16, 2022, UN Under-Secretary General Rosemary DiCarlo (the Department of Peacekeeping and Political Affairs), briefed the UN Security Council on the situation in Libya. Although there are plans to alleviate problems, the country is politically polarized, economically fragile, and dangerous in some locations with foreign fighters, foreign forces, and foreign mercenaries causing security concerns. DiCarlo said:

The human rights situation in Libya remains deeply worrying. The UNSMIL [United Nations Support Mission in Libya] observed an increase in hate speech, defamation and threats, as well as incitement to violence and acts of violence against activists, journalists, and political actors, including women.

State and non-State actors continued to arbitrarily arrest and detain human rights activists. In eastern Libya, in particular, national security laws were often arbitrarily applied. Meanwhile, a lack of due process and fair trial standards marred proceedings in military courts.

Migrants and refugees at sea continue to be intercepted by Libyan authorities and transferred to formal and informal detention centres where they reportedly suffer serious human rights violations. Deaths in custody, torture, starvation, and extortion also have been reported.²

In addition: “forced evictions by local authorities are a growing

concern. The need for durable solutions for physical, material and legal safety for internally-displaced persons remains a top priority.”³

According to the UN agency for humanitarian affairs (OCHA), there is an urgent need to fix Libya’s destroyed primary infrastructure. Armed groups and criminals have increased attacks on water and sanitation infrastructures, leading to the stoppage of regular water supply in some areas, coupled with deteriorating desalination plants and electricity cuts, affecting approximately 1.6 million people. 803,000 people are in need of some form of humanitarian assistance.⁴

Endnotes

- 1 “WFP Libya Country Briefing,” WFP World Food Program, January 2022. tinyurl.com/mppmdnu
- 2 “Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo’s briefing to the Security Council on the situation in Libya,” UN Political and Peacekeeping Affairs, March 16, 2022. tinyurl.com/5n8axmpx
- 3 Ibid. Endnote 2
- 4 “Libya Situation Report,” OCHA Services, February 25, 2022. gho.unocha.org/libya



At the Minnesota Peace Action Coalition rally on March 19, 2022, in Minneapolis, signs demanded that U.S./NATO not institute another lethal “no-fly zone,” like the one that destroyed Libya in 2011. Photo: Brad Sigal

Syria

On February 4, 2022, U.S. President Biden issued this statement: “Last night at my direction, U.S. military forces in the northwest Syria successfully undertook a counterterrorism operation to protect the American people and our Allies and make the world a safer place. Thanks to the skill and bravery of our Armed Forces, we have taken off the battlefield Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi – the leader of ISIS. All Americans returned safely from the operation.”¹

It’s ironic that the U.S. supposedly makes the world safer by killing enemies it helped create in the first place. But leaving that odd basic premise aside for the moment, we need to ask: How is that U.S. policy working overall? One report says that “several U.S. experts told the *BBC* that Qurayshi’s death would be a blow to IS, but the group would ultimately regroup.”²

After an Afghanistan aid worker and his children were mistakenly killed by a drone in Kabul, the U.S. military was supposed to be exercising caution in civilian areas. However, *Al Jazeera* interviewed residents who lived in the area where the ISIL leader was killed, saying that during the night there were 2½ hours of gunshots and machine guns firing from helicopters or some kind of aircraft. General Kenneth McKenzie, head of U.S. Central Command, says the ISIS leader detonated a device to blow him and his family up when their residence was surrounded by U.S. forces; McKenzie acknowledged three civilian deaths.³

The same day, *Al Jazeera* reported the incident in Syria: “At least 13 people, including six children [other reports also include four women among the 13] have been

killed during a United States special operations forces raid in Syria’s rebel-held Idlib province, according to residents and first responders. The overnight raid targeted a building in Atmeh, a densely populated town in northwest Syria near the Turkish border, where tens of thousands of people displaced by the country’s decade-long war live.” Nearby roads and buildings were also damaged in “a barrage of attacks.”⁴

Whatever happened at Atmeh, it is just one incident of many, involving U.S. military and weapons, in the eleven-year war in Syria. The results of the war have been devastating. In September of 2021, the UN reported that a minimum of

350,000 people had died as a result. 5.5 million Syrians became refugees in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt, and 6.7 million people were internally displaced.⁵

Sanctions, an act of war, against Syria accompanied military tactics. Relief Web reported that:

The sanctions that have been placed on Syria by the EU (including the UK) and USA have caused dire humanitarian consequences for Syrian citizens in government-controlled areas (which is 70 percent of the country) who are seeking to rebuild their lives. The politically-motivated goal of causing the

Syria, continued on page 8



Actual tweet issued by the White House.

Iraq

Before Ukraine, “Shock and Awe” may be the one recent war in the last twenty years to grip the attention of the majority of Americans. However, since that 2003 war on Iraq, there have been years of disruption as a result of the incitement of sectarian violence and the invasion of ISIS - issues that did not exist before U.S. involvement. As recently as last December, 12 people in a town in northern Iraq were killed by an ISIS cell. According to a March 2022 United Nations Refugee Agency report, Iraq “still faces large scale displacement, as a projected 1.2 million IDPs [Internally Displaced Persons] and five million returnees are affected by being or having been displaced due to conflict, which arose in 2014.” In addition, Iraq has taken in large numbers of Syrian refugees trying to escape war. Many of the displaced live in camps and struggle to survive. (“Iraq Multi-Sector Needs Assessment” Relief Web, March 2022)

The plight of refugees in Iraq exist within an already severely stressed country. Costs of War Project at the Watson Institute of Brown University, in a report updated in 2021 on Iraqi civilians found that:

several times as many Iraqi civilians [as the low figure provided in its report] may have died as an indirect result of the war [in 2003], due to damage to the systems that provide food, health care and clean drinking water, and as a result, illness, infectious diseases, and malnutrition that could otherwise have been avoided or treated.

The war has compounded the ill effects of decades of harmful U.S. policy actions towards Iraq since the 1960s, including economic sanctions in the 1990s that were devastating for Iraqis. Despite more than \$100 billion committed to aiding and reconstructing Iraq, many parts of the country still suffer from lack of

access to clean drinking water and housing. Life-threatening damage to Iraqi health care and other infrastructure has not been repaired: civilians are still dying in significant numbers.

Today, in 2022, the Iraqi people face many challenges. Workers went on strike in an oil field and violence occurred when area residents demanded job and land compensation. An industry service, *Iraq Oil Reports*, stated in March that multi-national companies are working, despite disruptions, to pump oil. In addition, Reuters reports violence as “Islamic state fighters continue to wage a guerilla war in remote regions.”

Syria,

continued from page 7

downfall of the Syrian government by prohibiting any foreign political engagement or investment in these areas has failed . . . Ultimately, it is now the citizens who suffer from the resulting lack of investment in basic services and infrastructure.

Of the huge amounts of humanitarian aid that western governments are sending ‘to Syria,’ the vast majority reaches either refugees who have fled the country, or only those areas of Syria occupied by militant groups opposed to the Syrian government. Most Syrian people are

therefore deliberately left unsupported; indeed, even their own efforts to help themselves and re-build their lives are hampered by sanctions.⁶

Sadly, this situation has not improved recently for most Syrians. According to a March 7, 2022 *Al-Monitor* report, U.S. sanctions were set to be waived “on all areas of Syria opposed to the Syrian government with the exception of gas and oil.”⁷

Endnotes

- 1 President Biden. White House Briefing Statement. [tinyurl.com/4pwjmsab](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-statements/2022/03/07/white-house-briefing-statement-on-the-syria-sanctions-waiver/)
- 2 “Islamic State Leader Abu Ibrahim al-Quaryshi Killed in Syria, US Says,” BBC, February 4, 2022. [tinyurl.com/3x4kjpps](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-61411111)

- 3 “ISIL leader killed in US raid. What happened?” Al Jazeera. February 4, 2022. [tinyurl.com/7d2c2eht](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/4/isil-leader-killed-in-us-raid-what-happened/)

- 4 Ali Haj Suleiman and Kareem Chehayeb. “Barrage of attacks: Civilians killed in US raid in Syria.” Feb. 3, 2022 [tinyurl.com/52z8k553](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/3/barrage-of-attacks-civilians-killed-in-us-raid-in-syria/)

- 5 “Syria: 10 years of war has left at least 350,000 dead.” UN News. September 24, 2022. [tinyurl.com/yc3frfryr](https://www.un.org/en/news/story/2022/09/24/syria-10-years-of-war-has-left-at-least-350-000-dead)

- 6 “Why Economic Sanctions on Syria Must Stop,” Relief Web, August 2020. [https://tinyurl.com/mry4b56x](https://reliefweb.int/report-syria/2020/08/why-economic-sanctions-syria-must-stop)

- 7 Amberin Zaman. “Biden to announce sanctions waivers for Syrian Kurds, Sunni-opposition held areas.” *Al-Monitor*. March 7, 2022. [tinyurl.com/mry4b56x](https://www.al-monitor.com/story/id/61411111)

Ukraine

Peace-loving people oppose the evil of every war. Their task is currently made more difficult due to the highly-charged media campaign pushing to continue the war in Ukraine through information warfare,¹ while at the same time alternative views are censored. President Zelensky is presented as an appealing, relatable Everyman in an archetypical David and Goliath fight. People in the U.S. are encouraged to be armchair warriors, incensed by emotion-rousing images they see in newspapers and on their TV and computer screens of civilian victims and valiant volunteer armies taking up guns to defend their beloved homeland. Many Americans fight vicariously, cheering on the underdog.

Support for the war comes as no surprise. Long *before* it even began, it was scripted, drawn from years of Russia-phobic programming (intensified in the last several years with Putin cast as demon du jour), layered onto the decades of the old American trope, “better-Red-than-dead,” and the hysteria of the anti-communist McCarthy and Red Scare eras.

Now Washington sends more weapons so the fighting in Ukraine continues. This will tragically prolong a war in which more people will die – Ukrainians and Russian soldiers, too. Money for weapons and war is money that could, instead, have been used to supply the needs of the American people.

The truth is that this war isn't really about Everyman versus Goliath. Ukraine is a proxy in a U.S./NATO battle against Russia. In a rapidly changing world, the U.S. wants to retain its hegemonic global domination and maintain Europe within its sphere, as

it has since the establishment of Pax Americana after WWII. But today, the “American Peace” is on shaky grounds. The U.S. fears that Europe is dependent on Russia as Europe is geographically part of the Eurasian land mass, making it convenient and cheap to obtain resources such as gas and oil via pipeline from its neighbor. (We are also told to fear China, which is in the process of developing a gargantuan Belt and Road Initiative, a contemporary version of the Silk Road trade route, traversing the world.)²

To understand that the war has been provoked is not to justify it, but to point out that it should not have occurred in the first place. Knowledgeable people cautioned that U.S./NATO could not expand east right up to Russia's borders – or in 2014, engage in the overthrow of the Ukrainian government, and subsequently conduct massive military exercises along Russia's borders for years, harass Russian ships near its southern port, sanction its financial sector, allow senators to go to eastern Europe to broadcast hate-filled messages threatening war, and install weapons in NATO countries that could hit Moscow in a matter of minutes.³

Instead, U.S./NATO could have promoted peaceful negotiations between Russia and Ukraine over the independence of the Donbass region where culturally Russian Ukrainians lived until ultra-nationalists and Nazis in the Ukrainian army entered to ethnically cleanse it over eight years, resulting in close to 14,000 deaths.

In addition to weapons, President Biden has been sending more U.S. armed forces to eastern Europe on Russia's border and adding to the

forces in Germany.

The War Powers Act was enacted to ensure that the executive branch notifies Congress about sending its military to “substantially enlarge” their numbers in a foreign country – further, Congress could challenge the President's authority to do so under what are supposed to be shared constitutional war powers. So far Congress has shown predominant, bipartisan support for the war.

Now it's up to us, the people who want peace, to demand that our government listen to us before two nuclear powers accidentally or on purpose get into a conflagration that blows up the whole world.

Endnotes

1 For more about information warfare, see: Dan Cohen, “Ukraine's Propaganda War: International PR Firms, DC Lobbyists and CIA Cutouts,” *Mint-Press News*, March 22, 2022. [tinyurl.com/2p8n9ub5](https://www.mintpressnews.com/2p8n9ub5)

2 For more about the geo-politics, see: Mary Beaudoin, “U.S. Weapons across the High Seas to the Lost Continent of Eurasia,” *Women Against Military Madness Newsletter*, Spring II, 2015. [tinyurl.com/5y835vt2](https://www.wamw.org/tinyurl.com/5y835vt2)

3 Realistic school foreign policy analysis: “John Mearsheimer Blames the U.S for the Crisis in Ukraine,” *The New Yorker*, March 1, 2022

The New President in Chile: a Sign of a Pink Tide Rising?

by Michael Livingston

On March 11 a new president took the helm of the Chilean government. Gabriel Boric, born in 1986, is the youngest person to be elected president of Chile. He is also the most left of all the presidents elected since the restoration of democracy in 1990. Boric has appointed the first majority female cabinet in Latin America and, as one of his first acts, met with indigenous Mapuche leaders (the largest group of native peoples in Chile) and signed the Escazú Environmental Treaty to help protect environmental activists.

In other actions, Boric has promised to balance social reforms with fiscal responsibility and proposed doubling the fuel stabilization fund (government money used to subsidize the price of gasoline and heating fuel) from \$750 million (U.S.) to \$1.5 billion (U.S.) as a

way to offset inflation caused by the invasion of the Ukraine.

At the same time, an elected constituent assembly (C.A.) is writing a new constitution to replace the Pinochet-era document that currently governs the country. The C.A. has extended its deadline for completing the document to July 5 of this year. If they do not have an agreed upon document at that time, the old constitution remains in effect. If they do approve a new constitution, it must be submitted to a national plebiscite before the end of this year.

Boric's election raises an important question: Are Chile and the rest of Latin America moving left against the neoliberal order that dominates the region? We shall see if a pink tide is again rising in Latin America.



Gabriel Boric. Photo: *Fotografoencampana*

Michael Livingston is an antiwar activist with the Minnesota Peace Action Coalition. He taught at Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez in Chile in 2014, 2016, and 2019. He is currently a professor of psychology at St. John's University and the College of St. Benedict in Minnesota.

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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

Pipeline Blues Vigil (Stop Line 3)

Every Monday, *note time*: 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., outside Minnesota Governor's Mansion, 1006 Summit Ave., St. Paul.

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.

Vigil to End War

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.

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.

Vigil to End the Occupation of Palestine

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

Immigrant Solidarity Vigils

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

In solidarity with immigrants and refugees to achieve justice, stand up to oppression. Vigil outside Bishop Whipple Bldg., 1 Federal Drive, Ft. Snelling, St. Paul. FFI: Facebook: Inter-faith Coalition on Immigration

Every Thursday, 7:30 a.m.

NO to family separation, deportation. Gather at ICE entrance, closest to Ft. Snelling light rail station. Vigil on Minnehaha Ave., Minneapolis driveway entrance to ICE. FFI: Call Pepper at 612-701-6963.

WAMM Action Groups

Board Meeting

Third Tuesday of every month via Zoom, 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. FFI: 612-827-5364.

End Domestic Militarism

Times/Date pending
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, 6:30 p.m. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Middle East

Second and fourth Monday of every month via Zoom, 9:30 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 Friday 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.

WAMM Movies

During the pandemic, 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

Report back on CodePink trip to Cuba

Saturday, April 9, 10 a.m. to Noon via Zoom. Six WAMM members visited Cuba in March and will report back. FFI: 612-827-5364

Assange Defense

Saturday, April 9, Noon, 4200 Cedar Avenue in Minneapolis. Speaker: Jordan Kushner, National Lawyers Guild. 1 p.m. outdoor rally for Assange. FFI: 651-644-2288

Deir Yassin Massacre commemoration

Saturday, April 9, 4 to 6 p.m., Meet at 29th & Nicollet in Minneapolis and walk to sculpture on the Greenway. Sponsored by Veterans for Peace Chapter 27. FFI: vfchapter27.org

On the Line: A Story of Class, Solidarity, and Two Women's Epic Fight to Build a Union

Monday, April 11, 7 p.m., Online via Zoom. Daisy Pitkin and a panel of labor activists discuss unionizing in Phoenix, AZ. FFI: 651-207-4926

National Day of Awareness for Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, 2 Spirit

Thursday, May 5, 1 to 4 p.m., 8:30 p.m. Duluth. FFI: nlmcoalition@gmail.com

Earth Day 2022

Saturday, April 23, save the date for events by End Militarism Against the Environment action group of WAMM and Climate Action Coalition. FFI: 612-827-5364

May Day March

Saturday, May 1, 12 noon. Lake Street march location TBA ending in the Mayday Council street festival at the Four Directions Family Center, 1527 East Lake St in Minneapolis. March sponsored by MN Workers United and MIRAC - Minnesota Immigration Rights Action Committee. FFI: miracmn.com

WAMM 15th Annual Walk Against Weapons of War

Saturday, May 28, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Lake Nokomis main beach in Minneapolis. See ad on back page..

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Access Zoom events

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



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FIFTEENTH ANNUAL WALK AGAINST WEAPONS!

Walk Against Weapons of War

Saturday, May 28, 2022 – Rain or Shine

WALK SCHEDULE

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 or short route tba.

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 WAMM office 612-827-5364 for more information!

