



# WAMM NEWSLETTER

Women Against Military Madness

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## Europe on the Verge of War

by Michael Livingston

*Report from Seville, Spain for WAMM*

Much has changed in Europe since the start of the Ukraine-Russia War on February 24, 2022. Under the direction of the United States, Europe and the U.S./NATO military alliance has moved step by step towards direct war with Russia. Many Europeans fear that a conventional war with Russia would have devastating consequences for Europe while a nuclear war, even a so-called limited one, would be fatal for the planet and the human species.

Civilian deaths in the last year in Ukraine are estimated to be over 8,000, with an additional 13,734 injured, according to the UN Office of

the High Commissioner for Human Rights on March 13, 2023.

Estimates for the number of combatants killed on either side are obscured by the fog of war. General Mark Milley, U.S. Joint Chief of Staff, said on January 20, at a news conference in Germany, that Russia and Ukraine had both suffered well in excess of 100,000 casualties.<sup>1</sup> Aside from this, Western bias has generally maintained that Ukraine is winning the war and portrays Russia as experiencing higher losses.<sup>2</sup> On February 2, *The New York Times* reported 200,000 Russian casualties since the start of the war. The *Washington Post* reported 120,000 Ukrainian combatant deaths on March 13. While these figures must be taken with a grain of salt, it is clear the human toll from this war is horrific.

### Waist deep in the Big Muddy and the big fool said to push on

Pete Seeger's 1967 folk song "Waist Deep in the Big Muddy" was a metaphor for the Vietnam War, and every major U.S. war since then. Now the U.S. and its NATO allies are involved in another major war, and the big fools say to push on.

According to the U.S. House Oversight Committee, on February 22, the U.S. had given Ukraine \$113 billion since the start of the war.

The renowned Kiel Institute for the World Economy in Germany reports

*Verge of War, continued on page 4*



*Sign for a severe-weather clothing store, Malmo, Sweden. As storm clouds gather over Europe, once-neutral Sweden awaits membership in NATO.*

## NEWSLETTER

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

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**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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# On the Anniversary of the Battle for Fallujah

by Sami Rasouli

One of the most devastating impacts of the illegal war conducted by the United States against the people of Iraq occurred in the city of Fallujah.

What began in 2003 as Shock and Awe, a strategy of war based on terrifying an “enemy” country with the use of overwhelming military power, resulted in the subsequent madness of U.S. military operations in Fallujah. The first battle against the city took place on April 4, 2004, and lasted until May 1, 2004. A second battle for U.S. control of Fallujah was waged in November and December of that year.

The weapons used in these battles caused a fourfold increase of certain types of cancer in the general population of Fallujah, while the incidence of cancer in its children increased 12 times.

We have these statistics because of an important study conducted by the Iraqi Ministry of Health and defended by the World Health Organization. This study confirmed that the rates not only of cancer and mortality, but

also of congenital anomalies among newborns in Fallujah is even greater than what was recorded among the survivors of the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Further confirmation of these distressing issues has been reported by Iraqi and international physicians and toxicologists, published in renowned medical and scientific journals, and featured in media throughout the world, but not in the U.S.

To this day, almost 20 years later, children in Fallujah are born with horrible, hideous, and deadly deformities. They are born without heads or eyes, and with exploding stomachs and incomplete organs.

The U.S. tested all kinds of explosive chemicals in Fallujah, such as thermal weapons, white phosphorus, and depleted uranium, as if the Iraqis were guinea pigs. Research confirms that unusual amounts of uranium and mercury are present in the roots of hair, important

*Battle for Fallujah, continued on page 3*



*A scene from “Six Days in Fallujah,” an electronic video game in which players can enact killing people in the city.*

## Battle for Fallujah, *continued from page 2*

evidence linked to the use of weapons prohibited by international law.

In 2005, a Pentagon spokesman told the *BBC* that white phosphorus was employed in the 2004 battle for Fallujah as an incendiary weapon against enemy combatants. (“Enemy combatants” is how the military described those trying to defend their city.) His inadvertent confession was soon denied by another Pentagon spokesman, who claimed that all the weapons that were used against Fallujah were legal.

What the Pentagon does not say is that white phosphorous caused severe burns for both “combatants” and civilians in Fallujah, and maimed the children. The cycles of political lying about the horrific consequences of incendiary weapons continued, as did the lie with which the war began.

Now, after so many years have passed since the suffering in Fallujah began, one of the saddest things is the way the name “Fallujah” is being used. A U.S. Navy warship (an amphibious assault ship) has been named the USS Fallujah as a kind of brazen bragging. And youth can play an electronic video game called “Six Days in Fallujah,” acting as soldiers fighting “enemy combatants” for control of the city.

The stubborn questions remain: Will U.S. leadership ever compensate Fallujah and Iraq for the war crimes committed two decades ago? If so, how would that be possible?

The compensation I, the writer of this article, seek is for the leadership to address the culture of violence that permeates the U.S. so that, instead, schools are made safe for children to attend, assault rifles aren’t available for disturbed people to mass murder others, all kinds of weapons (including projectiles containing depleted

uranium) are no longer supplied to fuel the war in Ukraine, and the U.S. stops using military force as its foreign policy.

Then we could have peace.

*Sami Rasouli is an Iraqi and U.S. citizen and conducted peace advocacy in both countries before, during, and after the U.S. war on Iraq. Soon after the battles of Fallujah, he formed the Muslim Peacemaker Team in his home city of Najaf and traveled to Fallujah volunteering to do anything he could to help the residents struggling with the aftermath, including clean-up.*

### **ACTION:**

#### ***Gamers for Peace***

A toxic mindset of problem-solving with violence is generated through digital games such as “Six Days in Fallujah.” These kind of electronic spaces are used by military recruiters to entice youth to join the military and become part of the war machine. *Gamers for Peace* is an initiative of Veterans for Peace for counter recruitment through digital spaces.

[veteransforpeace.org/  
take-action/gamers-peace](http://veteransforpeace.org/take-action/gamers-peace)

#Veteransforpeace  
#gamersforpeace



*Image: War Resisters International*



### **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
- Tackling Torture at the Top

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## Verge of War,

*continued from front cover*

that EU nations have been following the U.S. with contributions, albeit reluctantly, after a short delay and have provided \$59 billion in military, financial, and humanitarian aid. Of this, the humanitarian aid, like that of the U.S, is a negligible portion. The vast majority is military aid and financial aid to the Ukraine government.

The leading European NATO countries funding the war are Germany, the UK, France, Italy, and Spain.

The war in Ukraine is truly a proxy war, paid for with U.S./NATO money, fought with U.S./NATO weapons, and supported by the U.S./NATO sanctions against Russia.

In the last two months, since the report released by the Kiel Institute, there has been a sharp rise in military aid and transfers to Ukraine and within the NATO nations. For instance, on March 5, the EU announced an additional one billion euros for the purchase

of artillery shells for Ukraine, according to the Spanish newspaper, *El País*. The transfer of Leopard 2 battle tanks (a German-manufactured tank used by NATO forces) is another recent development. Currently, Ukrainian forces are being trained in Spain and other NATO countries to use the Leopard 2. The tanks fire armor-piercing shells that have depleted uranium cores, a hugely significant health and environmental hazard and one which Russia warned NATO against.<sup>3</sup> (For more about the effects of depleted uranium, see: “On the Anniversary of the Battle of Fallujah,” by Sami Rasouli in this newsletter.)

On March 17, *El País* reported that Poland has sent four MiG-29 fighter jets to Ukraine to strengthen the Ukrainian air force. The U.S./NATO military buildup is designed not just to fight Russia in Ukraine, but to weaken the Russians militarily.<sup>4</sup>

There are also very concerning transfers of weapons within the U.S./NATO alliance. On February 14 for example, Spain announced the transfer of NASAMS missiles to Estonia, a NATO member that

borders on Russia, to bolster the Estonian air defenses. The transfer will include Spanish troops to train the Estonian military on the use of the missiles and the advanced Sentinel radar system that is part of the package.

Wading into the big muddy has been good for one group, the defense industry. A special investigative report in the Spanish press showed that the top ten U.S. and European defense companies all experienced significant increases in sales in 2022. Six of these top ten companies are American, one is French, one is Italian, one is from the UK, and one is a consortium of German, French, and Spanish companies. Of the six Western countries that are backing the war: Boeing (the U.S.) is the big winner, with a 35 percent increase in sales, Northrop Grumman (the U.S.) and Airbus (the consortium of German, French, and Spanish companies) have also made out like bandits, with Northrop Grumman enjoying a 16 percent increase in sales and Airbus a 21 percent increase in sales.<sup>5</sup>

Yet, at the seemingly last minute, the EU appears to be losing some of its passion for war. The EU has slowed its delivery of military aid in the last month and has delayed imposing new sanctions on Russia while Ukrainian President Zelensky warned the EU that any delay will prolong the war. At the same time, officials of the EU, supported strongly by France, are talking to the Chinese government about its proposed peace plan. Spain’s Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, who will assume the EU presidency after French President Macron, is meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing. This mixed messaging is par for the course for

*Verge of War, continued on page 5*



*The symbol for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) with a map of the world on the ground before it.*

## Verge of War,

*continued from page 4*

European members of NATO, who have ultimately followed the U.S. lead in the last 12 months, albeit with lots of anxiety.

U.S./NATO forces achieved a major political and military victory with the decision of Finland to join NATO. Since World War II, Finland has remained neutral while at the same time having a highly trained and well-equipped military with universal military service. On March 23, Finnish President Niinistö signed into law all the legislation needed for Finland to join NATO. On the same day, a committee of the Turkish parliament approved Finland's membership (new members must be approved by all existing members to join NATO). On March 31, President Erdogan, joining Hungary, announced full approval of NATO membership for Finland, thus ending its former neutrality. (But, as of this date, both Turkey and Hungary continue to hold out on granting neutral Sweden membership in NATO.)

The addition of Finland means that the U.S./NATO forces can choke off Russia's access to the Baltic. At the same time, Finnish airbases are within easy striking distance of the Russian North Fleet whose main base is located on the Arctic Ocean. Russia is literally surrounded on its western border. This too raises the risk of nuclear war.

### **The consequences of war, so far**

From the U.S., the war in Ukraine seems distant. Inside Europe, it is here and now. In addition to the death and destruction in Ukraine, the war has created a massive refugee crisis and economic hardship



*Protests against the privatization of the Spanish public healthcare system draw massive crowds. Giant puppet is of a regional healthcare minister depicted with a Pinocchio nose. Photo: Alejandro Martínez Vélaz, Europa Press*

in the European Union (EU). This is taking place against an aggressive right-wing attack on the social safety net of the EU.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) the war has produced 4.8 million refugees so far. Poland has the over 1.5 million refugees and Germany has almost a million. The other EU nations also have refugees, and these refugees are straining the social safety net of the EU. A minuscule amount of humanitarian aid is being provided and many of the refugees are taken in by individual families, especially in Poland and some of the other EU states that directly border on Russia or its allies. In addition, there are refugees in Russia; while the exact number is unknown, the highest estimate is 2.8 million.

Adding to the massive refugee crisis, the working people of the EU have been especially hard hit. The cost of living has jumped 10 to 48 percent in the various EU member states. Hungary has been especially hard hit, with a one-year increase to approximately 48 percent in the cost of living. The people of Germany and Poland have both

experienced a 20 percent increase in the cost of living, while the UK, France, Italy, and Spain have all experienced increases in the teens.

The refugee crisis and the economic hardships of war are taking place against a backdrop of social unrest generated by the attacks of the EU ruling elites on the social safety net of EU member states. In France, changes to the social security system have generated weeks of massive protests as the Macron government tries to impose, by executive order, a change in the retirement age. In Spain and the UK, there have been massive and sustained protests against the destruction and privatization of the public healthcare system. On March 25, for instance, massive protests of 12 to 30 thousand took place in Seville led by doctors, nurses, and other healthcare workers. Other EU countries have also seen a rise in protests and strikes as the social safety net is attacked.

Alongside these protests is a possibly significant crisis in the EU banking sector, with the collapse and rescue of Credit Suisse by a

*Verge of War, continued on page 6*

## Verge of War,

*continued from page 5*

Swiss government-brokered deal with UBS (the largest bank in Switzerland and the largest private bank in the world), and the possible failure of Deutsche Bank (the 21st largest bank in the world and the largest in Germany) that was signaled by a sharp drop in the price of the bank's shares. A collapse of the German banking giant would trigger a banking crisis in the entire eurozone – the nations of the EU that use the euro as their common currency.

Since the end of World War II, Europe has never looked more fragile.

In spite of the refugee crisis, economic hardships, and attacks on the social safety net, the antiwar movement is still alive in Europe. While most of the mainstream conservative parties and socialist parties support the war (Pedro Sanchez, the socialist president of Spain, for instance, is a fanatical supporter of the U.S./NATO war.), the smaller far-left parties and the broader peace movement have organized against the war. Protests

took place in all major European countries on or around February 24, the one-year anniversary of the war. The protests were relatively small, compared to the protests that took place against the Iraq war, but they are larger than the protests in the U.S., for instance, – 10,000 protested in Berlin and 2,000 in London. Political demands at the protests included support for refugees, humanitarian aid to the Ukrainian people, no more arms shipments, and in some cases a call to withdraw from NATO.

### The danger of nuclear war

The danger of a nuclear war is real and is generally acknowledged and talked about, at least in the Spanish press. (For a perspective from the U.S., see the article by Coleen Rowley in the previous issue of the *Women Against Military Madness Newsletter*: “WWIII and Nuclear Annihilation,” Vol. 41 No. 1, Spring 2023.)

Since that article was written the world has moved even closer to nuclear war.

In mid-February, Norwegian military intelligence reported that the Russians had placed tactical

nuclear weapons on their submarines and warships of their Northern Fleet. This is the first time that these ships have carried tactical nuclear weapons since the fall of the USSR.<sup>6</sup>

A week later, Russian President Putin suspended the last nuclear arms control treaty with the U.S., the New START (Strategic Nuclear Arms Reduction) Treaty”. In his state of the nation address, Putin likened the demands made on Russia to “a kind of theater of the absurd” because the demand was for the U.S./NATO to inspect Russia's nuclear facilities but not to allow Russia to inspect theirs. And, he said, they behave as though there was “no connection between strategic offensive weapons and the conflict in Ukraine or other hostile Western actions, as if there are no vociferous claims about them seeking to inflict a strategic defeat on us.” He declared that Russia was willing to resume the treaty when the U.S. stopped the war in Ukraine and the U.S. brought its nuclear-armed NATO alliance partners, France and the UK, into arms control talks.<sup>7</sup> (The 2010 treaty had been concluded only between the U.S. and Russia.)

*El País*, on February 22, 2023, reported Putin saying that “nothing would stop Russia until the end” because Ukraine is “considered the historical territory of Russia.”

On March 25, Putin announced the transfer of tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus, stating that it was a response to the UK delivering depleted uranium munitions to Ukraine.<sup>8</sup> Since the fall of the USSR, Russia had not stationed nuclear weapons on land outside Russian territory. In contrast, the U.S. already has tactical weapons



*Anti-war demonstration on the one-year anniversary of the war on Ukraine. Photo: Stop the War Coalition*

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## Verge of War,

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at bases in Italy, Germany, Turkey, Belgium, and the Netherlands. In addition, NATO partners France and the UK maintain nuclear arsenals of strategic nuclear weapons. According to the foreign affairs representative of the EU Josep Borrell, this is “another escalation of the conflict.”<sup>9</sup>

The U.S./NATO nuclear forces now stand face to face with the nuclear forces of Russia. A single mistake and a few minutes are all that separates us from World War III and global catastrophe.

And the big fools say to push on.

*Michael Livingston is a longtime peace and antiwar activist. He has lived and worked in Honduras, Chile, and Spain. A professor of psychology at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University, he is currently directing a study abroad program in Seville, Spain.*

### Endnotes

- 1 Video of General Mark Milley speaking. Defense Secretary Austin and Gen. Milley hold news conference in Germany. PBS Newshour. January 20, 2022. [tinyurl.com/46w3bzzw](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/2022/01/milley-austin-germany/)
- 2 Norwegian Defense Chief General Eirik Kristoffersen told Norwegian TV2 on January 22, that there were 180,000 Russian combatants versus 100,000 Ukrainian combatants killed or missing in action. [tinyurl.com/37twfsb3](https://www.tinyurl.com/37twfsb3). Note: While Russian casualties may be inflated by the West, Russia has a larger population and the ability to send more soldiers. Russia has not published any casualties since September of 2022. All casualty figures for the war do not include 2014 casualties, mainly of ethnic Russians killed by Ukrainian forces, including by Nazi battalions in the Donbas region, which was one of the provocations for the war that began on February 24, 2022.
- 3 Konstantin Gavrilov, the head of the Russian delegation to the Vienna-based Arms Control Committee, told the Russian newspaper *Izvestia* that “if these weapons supplied by NATO are used against Russian troops, they would be considered a dirty bomb.” Russia Warns Against Supplying Depleted Uranium Munitions to Ukraine. *PL/Prensa Latina*. Jan. 26, 2023. [tinyurl.com/j7f6y4tt](https://www.tinyurl.com/j7f6y4tt)

- 4 Overextending and Unbalancing Russia: Assessing the Impact of Cost-Imposing Options. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2019. [rand.org/pubs/research\\_briefs/RB10014.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB10014.html); Ryan, Missy and Timsit, Annabelle. U.S. wants Russian military ‘weakened’ from Russian invasion Austin says. *Washington Post*. April 25, 2022. [tinyurl.com/u37e7hun](https://www.tinyurl.com/u37e7hun)
- 5 Gonzáles, Miguel. Major Weapons Manufacturers Reap Dividends from War in Ukraine. *El País*. March 13, 2023
- 6 Jackson, John. Russian warships armed with nuclear weapons deployed: Norway. *Newsweek*, February 14, 2023
- 7 Vladimir Putin’s Address to Federal Assembly of Russia. Feb. 21, 2023 [en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/messages/70565](https://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/messages/70565)
- 8 Putin announced that Russia was stationing tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus, in response to the fact that “the British Defence Secretary said they were going to deliver depleted uranium charges to Ukraine.” Russia to Deploy Tactical Nukes in Belarus. *Crux*. Youtube. March 26, 2023. [tinyurl.com/yuwkt572](https://www.tinyurl.com/yuwkt572)
- 9 Putin says Russia will station tactical nukes in Belarus. *El País*. March 25, 2023. [tinyurl.com/ymzvc955](https://www.tinyurl.com/ymzvc955)

### ACTION:

See page 11.

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# Eye Witness: the U.S. Hybrid War on Venezuela

by Andrew Josefchak and Drake Myers

Andrew Josefchak and Drake Myers joined a delegation of the Alliance for Global Justice in March of 2023, and provide an update on Venezuela.

We saw the enormous strength of will of the Venezuelan people who have come together to claw back a sense of normalcy under the U.S.-led blockade. Aiding them in this effort is the Socialist Unity Party of Venezuela (PSUV) government, which is people-oriented and supports the efforts of the citizens, empowering them to control their factories, agricultural land, and even zoos and casinos. The government provides healthcare, food, and housing, and subsidizes gas and other goods.

Still, people are struggling immensely. Many have lost loved ones to starvation and lack of medical care. This is due to restrictions placed on material that can be brought into Venezuela due to the U.S.-led hybrid war, characterized by extreme “sanctions” (more accurately called a blockade). The war on Venezuela now employs the use of lawfare as well, as in the case of the kidnapped diplomat Alex Saab, who traveled all over the world to secure food, medicine, and fuel for Venezuelans suffering from US-inflicted deprivation and death.

The days of the U.S. recognizing the U.S.-backed Juan Guaidó as “president of Venezuela” are over, as it has become impossible to pretend he ever held any power. But reports of a Biden-Maduro detente have been greatly exaggerated. The Biden regime still doesn’t recognize democratically elected Nicolás Maduro as president. However, Latin America has had another, smaller Pink Tide with Gustavo



“International Cultural Fair of Friendship Between Venezuela and Iran.”  
Los Caobos Park in Caracas, Venezuela. Photo: Drake Myers

Petro in Colombia and Lula de Silva back in Brazil. The future is bright, despite U.S warmongering.

## CLAP, Carnet de la Patria, and VenApp

The Venezuela government addresses food shortages imposed by the blockade with monthly boxes of food, provided by Local Committees for Supply and Production (CLAP), to as many as 85 percent of Venezuelan households. A new app called VenApp allows people to report power outages, water issues, or other municipal problems in their neighborhoods; it has resolved over a million of these reports in the last eight months.

Another significant government program is the *Carnet de la Patria*, identification cards that centralize economic planning and give access to about \$300 per household per month in subsidies. The program estimates the needs of the people, i.e., how many births to expect, or how many people have chronic illnesses, to better meet those needs. One socialist leader we met with

held up his card and proudly said, “This is how we made it through the pandemic!”

## Food Sovereignty

Venezuela was particularly hard-hit by sanctions because before former President Chávez, oil companies controlled Venezuela’s development, and it was cheaper to import food than to invest in agriculture. So despite the fact that Venezuela has an incredible climate for agriculture and very fertile soil, for the last hundred years very little was actually grown there. In the last couple of years, the country has seen vast improvements in food sovereignty: Venezuela now produces 94 percent of its own food after having to import 80 percent for the last 100 years.

## Reclaimed by the People

The government has encouraged workers to take over factories and agricultural land that have been abandoned by companies that have pulled out of the country. We

*Venezuela, continued on page 9*



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## Venezuela,

*continued from page 8*

met with the *Mujeres Conuqueras* (Women Small Farmers) of Valencia, a feminist farmers' organization that has taken charge of agricultural land. In the commune where the *Mujeres Conuqueras* organizes, agriculture has been so thoroughly integrated with industry that the majority of the food consumed there is planted, picked, packed, processed, and delivered all within the community, and all of this is controlled and planned by the workers themselves.

The farmers told us that when there are disagreements about how operations should be run, they call a meeting and discuss until an agreement is reached, making the working lives of the people who live in the commune far more democratic than anything we've experienced in the U.S. Similarly, fisherpeople who previously had been dependent on big companies who controlled the refrigerated transport equipment necessary to take fish to market now have direct access to this equipment, giving them control over their own work.

## Housing

In our 10 days in Venezuela we saw only one person sleeping on the streets. The government has so far built 4.4 million housing units providing free or low-cost homeownership. Chávista Dozthor Zurlent visited Minneapolis in November and told us: "We as Venezuelans don't have to pay taxes on the property of our houses. No one can take your house away from you. Housing is a human right in Venezuela." (Chávistas were original supporters of the reforms in Venezuela initiated with Hugo Chávez.)

## Internationalism

While the West tries to crush Venezuela, the country has deepened its solidarity with other targets of U.S. imperialism. We saw how China supports the Caracas arts scene and visited an Iranian international friendship fair. On the national scale Russia, China, and Belarus have taken up building contracts for housing developments and India, Iran, and China have purchased the country's crude oil exports. Venezuelan murals also showed powerful solidarity with Palestine, Cuba, and even the fight for Justice for George Floyd.

## Healthcare

We were able to visit one of the health fairs that serve the poorest sectors of Venezuelan society, people who were previously deprived of these services before Chávez's 1998 Bolivarian revolution. Part of Plan Búho, mobile dentist's offices gave people dental checkups: teeth-cleaning, treatments, medical checkups, and oral surgeries completely free of charge. These mobile units can take around 120 appointments a day and drive to different neighborhoods four days a week.

People at the fair were also able to talk to paralegals for free consultations, receive free over-the-counter medicines and birth control, and get vaccinations. While people waited in line for services, their kids played on bouncy castles and blow-up slides and got their faces painted. Specialty items requested by community members were being handed out: new wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches, diapers, and packs with pillows, diapers, wipes, powdered milk and other stuff – all packed inside a cradle/bathtub. We even saw people getting haircuts!

## Free Alex Saab!

We met with Camilla Fabri Saab, the wife of Venezuelan Alex Saab, who defied the U.S. blockade on Venezuela to secure life-sustaining goods that were prohibited. Saab has been illegally kidnapped, extradited, imprisoned, and tortured for 1,000 days now. He's currently being held in a Miami prison, unable to see his wife and young children. Saab is a diabetic cancer survivor and has been denied access to medical treatment for the entire duration of his imprisonment. Camilla shared extremely alarming information about Alex's health. Four weeks ago, he began vomiting blood. His cell is kept so cold that his skin appears green. He is missing teeth due to beatings. Even more disgustingly, prison officials have diagnosed Saab with PTSD (from the torture they themselves inflicted) in order to justify drugging him to the point where he at times can't even speak.

It was clear to us from many conversations we had with Venezuelans that Alex Saab is considered a national hero in Venezuela, and that international solidarity activists should follow and support the Free Alex Saab Movement and take up Saab's freedom as the primary demand of their Venezuela solidarity work. The case is similar to the fights for other political prisoners: Leonard Peltier, Julian Assange, or Mumia Abu-Jamal.

*Andrew Josefchak and Drake Myers are active members of the Antiwar Committee, Minneapolis.*

## ACTION:

For those who live in the Twin Cities, postcards are available at 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis to send solidarity messages to Alex Saab. Stay tuned for actions to support this fight.

# **F.Y. 2023 U.S. MILITARY – \*A “MILITARY” GOVERNMENT??**

**\*U.S. Military Spending will exceed the annual spending of the next 10 Countries combined. With only 5% of the world’s population, U.S. taxpayers will pay for 50% of the Total World’s Military Spending (see below) ... **UNCONSCIONABLE!!****

<b>WORLD RANK</b>	<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>2023 ANNUAL MILITARY BUDGET</b>
1.	<b>United States</b>	<b>\$858 Billion</b>
2.	China	\$237 B
3.	Saudi Arabia	\$ 67 B
4.	India	\$ 61 B
5.	United Kingdom	\$ 55 B
6.	Germany	\$ 50 B
7.	Japan	\$ 49 B
8.	Russia	\$ 48 B
9.	South Korea	\$ 44 B
10.	France	\$ 42 B
11.	Brazil	\$ 38 B

## **MILITARY GREED...HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?**

50% of the \$1.7 Trillion \*FY23 “Discretionary” Budget will go to the Department of Defense and the other 21 Departments/Agencies must split the rest as shown below.

<b>Department/Agency</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>DEFENSE (Pentagon)</b>	<b>\$858 Billion</b>
Health/Human Services	\$127 B
Education	\$ 88 B
Justice	\$ 38 B
Labor	\$ 15 B

Source: Office of Management and Budget

### **How’s that for a distorted sense of priorities?!!**

This 2023 Military Spending Postcard is produced, distributed and can be ordered from [www.womenagainstmilitarymadness.org](http://www.womenagainstmilitarymadness.org)

“A nation that continues year after year to spend more on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.”  
– Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**WAMM**  
Women Against Military Madness  
general@wamm.me  
4200 Cedar Ave S, Suite 3  
Minneapolis, MN 55407-3485  
612-827-5364

## **THE SHAMEFUL FACTS**

The IMPACT of MILITARY SPENDING on VITAL Needs at HOME!

1. The U.S. ranks #1 in the world in Military Spending but is the only Industrialized country in the world without Universal Healthcare and is currently ranked 37th in Quality of Healthcare.
2. The U.S. ranks #1 in the world in Military Spending, but 32nd in the world in literacy, 31st in Math and 23rd in Science of all industrialized countries in the world.
3. The U.S. ranks #1 in the world in Military Spending, but 17th in the world in life expectancy.
4. The U.S. ranks #1 in the world in Military Spending, but 29th in the world in infant mortality.

**The Question Exists: In 2023 the U.S. will spend over \$800 billion on the Military. That figures out to be \$2 Billion per/day or \$1 million every minute. The Question Exists: SHOULD WE CONTINUE TO ADD MONEY TO AN ALREADY BLOATED MILITARY BUDGET OR CUT THE PENTAGON A VERY MINIMAL 10% (OF \$800 B) OR \$80 B for 2024 WHICH WOULD:**

## **Fund human needs, not war!**

1. End Homelessness: Provide housing for more than half a million homeless in this country with money to spare. That assumes an annual cost of \$30,000 per person.
2. COVID Testing: Conduct 2 billion coronavirus tests, six free tests for every person in the United States.
3. Free College: Fund free college education for 2 million low-income students.
3. Clean Energy: Fund enough renewable energy to power almost every household in the U.S.
4. Teachers: Hire 900,000 public elementary teachers, adding about nine new teachers to every school in the country.
5. COVID Unemployment Relief: Send \$2,300 checks to the more than 32 million unemployed people....AND IT GOES ON AND ON ... For only 10% of the 2023 Military Budget...THE CHOICE SHOULD BE OURS!

Sources: SIPRI, CIAworldfactbook.us, costofwar.com, World Health Org.

For more info: [general@wamm.me](mailto:general@wamm.me) • 612-827-5364 • [womenagainstmilitarymadness.org](http://womenagainstmilitarymadness.org)

*Available on two-sided (4 inch x 5.5 inch) cardstock. Pick up at the WAMM office, or send \$10 for pack of 100 to cover mailing costs. Indicate the number you wish to receive and send a check to WAMM, 4200 Cedar Ave. S., Suite 3, Minneapolis, MN 55407.*

# 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.

## WAMM Ongoing Peace/Justice Vigils

### *Pipeline Blues Vigil (Stop Line 3)*

Monday, 4:00 to 5:00 p.m., outside MN Governor's Mansion, 1006 Summit Ave., St. Paul. Co-sponsored by WAMM and Veterans for Peace Chapter 27. FFI: 612-827-5364. (Date and time remain until June when construction work begins at the Governor's Mansion. The Pipeline Blues Vigil activists will be discussing and deciding about the future of the Vigil during the coming Mondays. Join the Vigil and the discussion, any Monday, 4:00-5:00 p.m.)

### *Vigil to End War*

**Please note:** time change. 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. Sponsored by WAMM End War Committee. FFI: 612-827-5364.

### *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. Sponsored by WAMM Middle East Committee. FFI: 612-827-5364.

### *Immigration Solidarity Vigil*

See "Immigrant Solidarity Vigils" next column.

## Immigrant Solidarity Vigils

### *Every Tuesday, 7:30 a.m.*

Vigil at the ICE entrance on 6000 Minnehaha Ave., Minneapolis. (Not far from Bishop Whipple Building where Immigration Court is held.) Park at the Ft. Snelling commuter light-rail parking lot. Sponsored by WAMM. Call Pepper at 612-701-6963.

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

Vigil at 1 Federal Drive, Ft. Snelling, (Minneapolis/St. Paul), 55111, outside the Bishop Whipple Building, where Immigration Court is held for five-state area. Prayer, song, courtwatch. Sponsored by Minnesota Interfaith Coalition on Immigration. FFI: mnicom.org

## 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/Dates pending. Updates at facebook.com/WAMMEDM. 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.

## WAMM Ongoing Events

### *WAMM Monthly Movies*

Please note: reverted to Monday evenings. 4200 Cedar Ave. S. (entrance on 42nd Street) Projected on big screen. Free admission. All are welcome. Discussions follows film. FFI: 612-827-5364 or email: general@wamm.me

### *The Territory*

Monday, May 8, 7:00 p.m. Immersive on-the-ground look at the tireless fight of the indigenous Uru-eu-wa-wa people against the encroaching deforestation brought by farmers and illegal settlers in the Brazilian Amazon who illegally burn and clear protected land. Partially shot by the Uru-eu-wa-wa people. Verite' footage captured over three years as the community risks its lives to set up their own news media team to expose the truth.

## Special Events

### *"Funds for Human Needs, Not War!" Anti-war Protest*

April 15, 1:00 p.m., Mayday Plaza, Third St. and Cedar Ave. S. (301 Cedar Ave. S.), Minneapolis, 55454. Say no to endless U.S. wars: Russia, China, Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Somalia, everywhere. Send an antiwar message on Tax Day. FFI: 612-827-5364

## *Militarism Fuels the Climate Crisis: Earth Day Event*

Saturday, April 22, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., Cleveland Ave. and Ford Parkway, St. Paul. Join Veterans for Peace and the Peace Bus bannering, signs connecting militarism and the climate crisis. Receive a peace button, greet cars and pedestrians. Co-sponsored by End Military Madness Against the Earth (EMMAE) action group of WAMM. FFI: 612-827-5364

### *Celebrating the Life of Polly Mann*

Saturday, May 13, 2023. St. Joan of Arc Church, 4537 Third Ave. S., Minneapolis 55419. Gathering at 10:00 a.m., memorial at 11:00 a.m.

### *Medea Benjamin of Code Pink in the Twin Cities.*

May 19-21. Details: TBA.

### *Ukraine/Anti-War Actions*

See the WAMM calendar online or call the WAMM office at 612-827-5364.

### *16th Annual Walk Against Weapons of War*

Saturday, June 3, 2023. Como Lake Pavilion, 1360 Lexington Parkway North, St. Paul 55103. 10:30 a.m. Volunteer/Walker Check-in at WAMM table in front of pavilion, 11:00 a.m. Walk begins, 12:00 noon Short rally. FFI: 612-827-5364 or general@wamm.me

### *Certified Fair Trade Extra Virgin Olive Oil from Palestine.*

A delicate, full-bodied olive oil with a sweet, smooth taste; peppery finish. 750 ml bottle olive oil \$23 from Zatoun, a registered non-profit. All sale proceeds go to projects serving Palestinian youth education, planting olive trees in Palestine, promoting awareness of Palestine. Available at WAMM office. Call first: 612-827-5364.

Check the WAMM calendar and zoom links at [womenagainstmilitarymadness.org](http://womenagainstmilitarymadness.org) or call the WAMM office: 612-827-5364.



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**FREE ASSANGE!**  
*Revealing war crimes  
is not a crime!*

# **Women Against Military Madness 16th Annual Walk Against Weapons of War**



**Saturday, June 3, 2023 • rain or shine**

**Como Lake Pavilion**

**1360 Lexington Parkway North, St. Paul 55103**

10:30 a.m. Volunteer/Walker Check-in at WAMMM table in front of pavilion

11:00 a.m. Walk begins

12:00 noon Short rally

1.7 mile path around the lake, with benches for resting all along the way. Restrooms inside Como Pavilion.

**FFI: 612-827-5364**

*Join other peacemakers for a vibrant, visible and vocal presence at Como Lake in St. Paul.*

*WAMMM has a form for you to sign up anyone who wants to sponsor you.*

*Request payment by check to Women Against Military Madness (WAMMM).*

*This year's walk is dedicated to Marie Braun.*