

Another Mother for Peace

November 2010



MID-TERM ELECTIONS ARE OVER...

...and another trip around the sun is almost completed. As we take off on our next revolution around Earth's favorite star, we are still not ready to pack up our picket signs for peace – not in the face of a bloated military budget and continued wars. Not when the United States has allocated nearly \$5.3 billion to construct facilities for the Afghanistan army and national police over the next three to four years, while the plan to withdraw our troops won't begin until mid-2011. Not when our upwardly spiraling military spending continues to divert our attention and to sacrifice the poor and unemployed, and the health of our citizens and of our environment. Not when public unhappiness and lack of support for the war is growing.

But doesn't withdrawing from Afghanistan mean abandoning the Afghan people? That's what we're being told. If coalition troops leave, they say, Afghan women will again live in the Dark Ages.

Exhibit A: The TIME Magazine cover headline that asked in bold letters, "What Happens if We Leave Afghanistan?" It was paired with a shocking photo of Bibi Aisha, a young Afghan woman whose nose and ears had been hacked off "on orders of the Taliban."¹ This, the cover implied, is what will happen: Women will be mutilated – or worse – by Taliban warlords.

The truth behind the horrifying photo of Bibi Aisha, however, is that her disfiguring wounds had nothing to do with the Taliban. She had run away from her husband, her father-in-law tracked her down, and then administered his own sort of rough justice. Horrible, yes, but not a sentence ordered or carried out by Taliban fighters. Furthermore, Bibi Aisha was maimed despite the presence of American soldiers. How does that argue for keeping them there?

Author and activist Ann Jones was the journalist who brought TIME's faulty logic to light. Jones has worked with women in Afghanistan since 2002. Her book, *Winter in Kabul*, is a scathing indictment of military and civilian failures in the time since the Taliban ceded governance to Western powers.

"What's taking place in Afghanistan is commonly depicted, as it is on the TIME cover, as a battle of the forces of freedom, democracy and women's rights ... against the demon Taliban," Jones wrote in the *The Nation*. "But the real struggle is between progressive Afghan women and men, many of them young, and a phalanx of regressive forces."²

continued on page 2

Jones also confirmed what we reported in last winter's newsletter: After ten years of bombings, drone attacks, firefights, and the Karzai government, Afghan women's lives have not significantly improved. What gains were made are being undone by assassinations, rape, and death threats.

Afghan women deserve peace, security, education, job opportunities, health care, political power, and freedom of movement. AMP believes that more war will bring less of what Afghan women really need.

And more war will bring less of what we really need. Which is why two congressmen – Representative Barney Frank (D-MA) and Representative Ron Paul (R-TX) – have transcended political affiliations to urge President Obama's deficit commission to put the usually sacrosanct Pentagon budget on the table. "If we are not able to get military spending under control," they argue, "we will not be able to respond to important domestic needs."

Reps. Frank and Paul have asked their congressional colleagues to sign a letter proposing a 25 percent reduction in defense spending. A trillion dollars less for war will not compromise national security, they say; in fact, restraint would actually make our country safer by promoting a more peaceful world.³

The Afghanistan Study Group also views military withdrawal as an economic necessity. Their recent report, "A New Way Forward: Rethinking U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan," reasons that by pulling 32,000 troops out by October 2011, and another 30,000 by July 2012 (leaving 40,000 in a "training role"), will save \$60-\$80 billion per year.⁴

No longer a lofty goal of idealistic liberal thinkers, peace has become a deficit busting measure. Maybe they are finally listening to us!

AMP supports these proposals to cut obsolete and bloated military spending as a sane strategy toward fiscal responsibility, and lauds the elected representative signees for being a compelling voice in joining our plea for a more peaceful world. The message they are sending is the one we have sent for the last 45 years – that ***War is Not Healthy for Children and Other Living Things.***

1. TIME, August 9, 2010.
 2. Ann Jones, "Afghan Women Have Already Been Abandoned," in *The Nation*, August 12, 2010.
 3. For more information about these proposals, see "Debt, Deficits, and Defense: A Way Forward," by the Sustainable Defense Task Force, which was formed in response to a request from Representative Barney Frank (D-MA), working in cooperation with Representative Walter B. Jones (R-NC), Representative Ron Paul (R-TX), and Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR), to explore possible defense budget contributions to deficit reduction efforts that would not compromise the essential security of the United States. The Project on Defense Alternatives coordinated the work of the Task Force.
<http://www.comw.org/pda/>
 4. <http://www.afghanistanstudygroup.org>
-

DID YOU KNOW ?

- √ The estimated true cost of the war in Iraq two years ago was \$3 trillion+, well exceeding the Bush government's staggering projections of \$50-\$60 billion. (Linda J. Bilmes and Joseph E. Stiglitz, Washington Post March 9, 2008)
- √ There is no official count of civilian deaths in Iraq. Estimates range over one million:
 - Iraq Family Health Survey: 151,000 [June 2006]
 - Lancet: 654,965 excess deaths [June 2006]
 - Opinion Research Business (ORB): 1,033,000 [January 2008]
 - Associated Press: 110,600 deaths [April 2009]
 - Iraq Body Count: 98,170 - 107,152 [October 2010]
- √ Civilians killed in Afghanistan as a result of the war amount to as high as 34,000.
- √ 5,773 American soldiers have been killed in Iraq and Afghanistan and almost 50,000 have been wounded.



As women and children mourn the loss of family members, U.N./Afghan observers back up Afghan claims that many Afghan civilians have been killed in U.S. military raids.
<http://blogs.bet.com/news/newsyoushouldknow/tag/afghanistan>



Photo by Stan Carroll, Horn Lake, Mississippi
Fallen soldier's family receives flag-draped coffin of Pfc. William Brandon Dawson, 20, killed in action September 24, 2010, in Kabul.

Peace Homework

Ask your congressperson to co-sponsor legislation introduced by Representative Barbara Lee (CA) to repeal war funding. Her bill, H.R. 6282, states:

“Congress finds that the Authorization for Use of Military Force...signed into law on September 18, 2001, has been used to justify a broad and open-ended authorization for the use of military force and such an interpretation is inconsistent with the authority of Congress to declare war and make all laws for executing powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States.”

Take Action: Urge your Representative to co-sponsor Barbara Lee's legislation to repeal the 2001 Authorization for the use of military force. Ask five friends to do the same...

Peace Materials



Medallion \$15.00

◀ “War is not healthy for children and other living things” logo, approximately 1” x 1¼”. Available in gold or silver metallic finish.



Note Cards \$15.00

◀ Boxed set of 10 cards with matching envelopes. “War is not healthy...” color logo on front, blank inside.



Pax Materna Poster \$15.00

◀ Original AMP poster (4¾” x 34”) from 1985. “No mother is enemy to another mother” and “War is not healthy...” logo in 18 languages. On the back is our Pax Materna.



Embroidered Patch \$5.00

◀ Our beautiful “War is not healthy...” sunflower logo on a 3” x 3½” patch to sew or iron on.



Letter Seals \$2.00

◀ 40 self-adhesive seals per sheet. Stamp-size seals with “War is not healthy...” logo. Put these on your mail (and everything else!).

Toddler Fine Jersey T \$16.00

◀ Bring the Message of Peace to the Next Generation! Another Mother for Peace now has T-shirts for toddlers in sizes 2, 4 and 6. These are high-quality 100% cotton garments manufactured in the U.S.A. in a “sweat-shop free” environment, carefully tailored in a lightweight knit to fit any active youth. In white with the “War is not healthy for children and other living things” logo silk-screened on the chest by union workers.



Size	Size:	2	4	6
Guide	Full body length:	15.5”	16.625”	17.75”
	Chest width:	12.625”	13.625”	14.625”



Prices do not include tax or shipping. Visit www.anothermother.org for a complete list of our Peace Materials and to order online.

Another Mother for Peace

www.anothermother.org mother@anothermother.org
 8950 W. Olympic Blvd., Box 194, Beverly Hills, CA 90211-3575
 (800) 763-4670 (310) 335-4925

EDITORIAL BOARD
 Carol J. Schneider, Susan Schneider,
 Sarah Forth, Bill Donnelly

Another Mother for Peace is a non-profit, non-partisan association dedicated to eliminating the use of war as a means of solving disputes among nations, people and ideologies.

I JOIN WITH MY SISTERS IN EVERY LAND IN THE PAX MATERNA – PERMANENT DECLARATION OF PEACE THAT TRANSCENDS OUR IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES. IN THE NUCLEAR SHADOW, WAR IS OBSOLETE. I WILL NO LONGER SUFFER IT IN SILENCE NOR SUSTAIN IT BY COMPLICITY. THEY SHALL NOT SEND MY SON TO FIGHT ANOTHER MOTHER’S SON. FOR NOW, FOREVER, THERE IS NO MOTHER WHO IS ENEMY TO ANOTHER MOTHER.

“War is Not Healthy for Children and Other Living Things” and Sunflower design, Lorraine Schneider ® © 1968, 2003 Another Mother for Peace, Inc. All rights reserved.