

Another Mother for Peace

Fall 2009



AFGHANISTAN: IS THIS WAR REALLY NECESSARY?

There are plenty of reasons to oppose the continuing war in Afghanistan. At the latest count, the lives of nearly 1,500 coalition soldiers and more than 31,000 Afghans have been lost. Through 2008, the U.S. has invested \$173 billion on the Afghan war—money not spent in restoring our economy or supporting health care reform. There is no defined end-point for U.S. presence in Afghanistan. Each new assessment results in a request for more sons and daughters, husbands and wives, and even parents to fight this war.

Here are the accepted justifications for U.S. involvement in Afghanistan and our responses:

“Fighting this war will prevent Al-Qaida from finding a safe haven in Afghanistan, thus saving the U.S. from another terrorist attack.”

President Obama’s National Security Adviser, former Marine General James Jones, says there is now a diminished Al-Qaida presence in Afghanistan, and that the 100 or fewer operatives who remain have no ability to attack the U.S. or its allies. Additionally, counter-terrorism experts know that the September 11th attacks did not require a “haven” in Afghanistan. Plans for that horrifying day were made in apartments, hotels, and flight schools in Europe and the U.S. AMP believes that further death and destruction of Afghans and their country will incite rather than prevent acts of terrorism.

“The defeat of the Taliban will protect the women of Afghanistan.”

The current chaos and corrupt Afghan government do not help the women of Afghanistan. War always negatively affects women and children. In a sad bit of irony, the U.S., in order to “win” the war, has created alliances with warlords who are as oppressive toward women as the Taliban. After eight years of war, one out of every 55 Afghan mothers still dies in childbirth. One in four Afghan children still die before their fifth birthday. Every third Afghan still lacks adequate food and shelter. War has not made Afghanistan healthy for children or other living things!

“Only under the protection of U.S. and coalition forces can democratic institutions be established in Afghanistan.”

Can democracy be constructed on a battlefield? AMP says NO! In fact, the war in Afghanistan has thwarted the development of the very institutions it claims to foster. The judiciary is widely viewed as

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corrupt; Afghans with power and/or money are unlikely to be prosecuted for serious crimes such as rape and manslaughter. Powerful warlords responsible for massacres are not held to account. Drug dealing and sex trafficking are rampant. Most egregiously, to maintain his hold on power, President Hamid Karzai forced through parliament a law that severely restricts the rights of Shi'a Muslim women. AMP believes you can pursue a war or help support a nascent democracy but never both.

"America needs to demonstrate its staying power. We've made a commitment to the Afghan people and we must fulfill it."

There are better ways than war to fulfill American responsibilities to the Afghan people. Right now, 85 percent of money allocated for Afghanistan goes to the military while only 15 percent is allocated for social needs. Those figures need to be reversed. Afghans don't need more guns; they need schools, hospitals, housing, job training, agricultural and business assistance, support for the arts. Then the U.S. must end the military occupation, which makes



it difficult for NGO and government aid workers to function. Finally, the best way to satisfy our commitment to Afghanistan is by encouraging negotiations among all Afghan groups (including the Taliban) and initiating diplomacy with regional powers such as Pakistan, India, and Iran. "Staying the course" was what we did in Vietnam; do we need another startlingly moving memorial in honor of our lost men and women?

Can we afford to buy justifications that will lead us into another un-ending war? AMP believes we cannot.

DID YOU KNOW ?

- ✓ The number of coalition soldiers, sailors and marines that have died fighting in the war in Afghanistan is 1,481. Of those, 825 men and women were members of the U.S. armed forces. (www.icasualties.org)
- ✓ Tens of thousands of Afghans have died since the U.S. invasion in 2001, killed by both coalition forces and insurgents. In 2008, the number of civilian deaths increased by 40% over 2007. Airstrikes have resulted in two-thirds of the civilian deaths caused by the coalition. (www.nationalpriorities.org)
- ✓ The United States has spent more than \$228 billion on the war in Afghanistan. Coalition countries have spent billions more. (www.nationalpriorities.org)
- ✓ 3.7 million Afghan refugees fleeing the conflicts of the past two decades have settled in neighboring countries. As of September 2008, these countries have closed their borders to additional refugees and some have initiated forced repatriation programs. (www.nationalpriorities.org)



Source:
unambig.wordpress.com/2009/09/17/

Peace Homework

✓ Get informed about what Afghan women are doing to advance their cause.

- Read the United Nations report, "Silence is Violence, End the Abuse of Women in Afghanistan" July 8, 2009. United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/vaw-english.pdf)

- Learn what women in Afghanistan are telling us at the Afghan Women's Network. (www.afghanwomensnetwork.org)

- Check out the "Women in Afghanistan Series" on Women's E-News. (www.womensenews.org/story/intl/090819/women-in-afghanistan)

- Understand the anti-fundamentalist perspective of the oldest political organization of women (since 1977) in Afghanistan, the Revolutionary Association of Women in Afghanistan (RAWA) and its close partner, The Afghan Women's Mission. (www.rawa.org/index.php) and (afghanwomensmission.org/index.php)

- Listen to two Afghan human rights activists on National Public Radio. (www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=113465160)

- Learn about the programs at the United Nations Development Fund for Women in Afghanistan. (www.unifem.org/afghanistan/prog/WPG/index.php)



✓ Enlist others in your community in demanding that the war in Afghanistan must end. Take the Another Mother for Peace message to demonstrations and vigils using our 14" x 22" heavy cardboard placards with our "War is not healthy for children and other living things" logo. For only \$25 to offset shipping costs, we will send you 25 placards to use at upcoming peace events. Send an email to mother@anothermother.org or call our toll-free number at 800 763 4760 giving us your contact information — we'll be in touch to discuss the details. *You must agree not to sell the placards.*



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.

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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.



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EDITORIAL BOARD

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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.



\$16 plus shipping and handling.

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

Peace Materials

Medallion \$15.00
"War is not healthy for children and other living things" logo, approximately 1" x 1 1/4". Available in gold or silver metallic finish.



Embroidered Patch \$5.00
Our beautiful "War is not healthy..." sunflower logo on a 3" x 3 1/2" patch to sew or iron on.

Note Cards \$15.00
Boxed set of 10 cards with matching envelopes. "War is not healthy..." color logo on front, blank inside.

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!).

Pax Materna Poster \$15.00
Original AMP purple poster (4 3/4" 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.

Toddler Fine Jersey T \$16.00
Tailored in lightweight knit to fit any active youth. 100% cotton.

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