https://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/2019/07/omni-no-war-against-iran-newsletter-29.html

COMPiled by DICK BENNETT FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE AND JUSTICE
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Dear friends,

Our 4th No Iran War peace protest went well again, and we continue getting a lot of support from passing cars. Here are some pictures from the event: https://www.facebook.com/noahautumn.tomlinson/posts/10157407416515775

This week we expanded the content of the protest to highlight that the U.S. is already waging economic warfare on Iran with crippling sanctions, and that this war is yet another disastrous example of U.S. imperialism. The protest included this speech: (https://www.facebook.com/noahautumn.tomlinson/videos/10157404752100775/) and the attached handout on these subjects. Far too few understand that the U.S. is an empire and the intersectionality of imperialism is connected to so many other issues, from immigration to the environment.

We need your help speaking up for peace. Please join us at our next weekly protest, every Saturday in July at 11 AM in front of the Washington County Courthouse in Fayetteville. I'm also attaching flyers for this month's event again, in case anyone can help distribute them.

Thank you,
Abel Tomlinson
No Iran War & Anti-Imperialism Peace Protests

OMNI Center | July 2019

Recognizing US Imperialism in Iran and Globally
We must help our fellow citizens see this war on Iran is yet another example of imperialism, a word very rarely mentioned in mainstream media. The U.S. is indeed an empire of over 800 foreign military bases in over 80 nations (1). Marine General Smedley Butler warned us clearly about U.S. corporate-military imperialism and the “war racket” a long time ago (2). We must also rekindle the proud memory of Mark Twain and the Anti-Imperialist League, which arose in 1898 in response to U.S. annexation of the Philippines, an imperialist war that killed over 200,000 civilians.

Iran Sanctions are Economic Warfare
We must help our fellow citizens see or remember that the U.S. has already been waging war on Iran, and many other nations, for a long time. Although no physical bombs have been dropped, crippling economic warfare of sanctions have been devastating Iran, including the civilian population (3). Sanctions can be deadly. For example, U.S.-led sanctions killed 1.5 million Iraqis in the 1990’s (4), including over 500,000 children (5). U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was asked on national television about these sanctions killing more children than the nuclear bombings of Japan, and she notoriously said the price was “worth it” (6). More recently, U.S. sanctions killed 40,000 civilians in Venezuela (7).

Imperialism is a Principle Cause of Refugees
Many of our interlocked problems and consequent solutions are difficult to fully understand unless the existence of empire is recognized, especially the refugee crisis. Imperialism is deeply interlocked with the global refugee crisis from Latin America to the Middle East. The current U.S. immigration debate focuses only on symptoms of how to treat migrants, while ignoring the actual causes of Latin American refugees. Most of the people are fleeing violent instability and poverty caused by economic warfare, coups and other machinations of corporate-military imperialism (8,9).

Imperialism Harms the Environment, Economy & Democracy
Imperialism is also very much a climate and environmental issue since the U.S. military is the world’s largest institutional consumer of oil (10), among a litany of other environmental harms (11). It is also very much an economic issue, with the military empire costing over $1 trillion per year at the expense of peaceful human needs like education and clean energy (12). Lastly, as Professor Chalmers Johnson writes in his books, imperialism is corrosive to democracy not just to its victims, and “History tells us that one of the most unstable political combinations is a country—like the U.S. today—that tries to be a domestic democracy and a foreign imperialist” (13).
References:
1. U.S. Empire of Over 800 Military Bases: shorturl.at/sEFNU
3. Iran Sanctions Are Economic Warfare: shorturl.at/boyU7
4. Iraq Sanctions Killed 1.5 Million People: shorturl.at/myPXY
5. Iraq Sanctions Killed Over 500,000 Iraqi Children: shorturl.at/dGHOU
6. Madeleine Albright says sanctions were “worth it”: shorturl.at/cjwAR
7. Venezuela Sanctions Kill 40,000 People: shorturl.at/csEK0
8. Imperialism and Latin American Refugees: shorturl.at/dghG0
9. Corporate Economic Imperialism and Refugees: shorturl.at/dtvFW
10. Military Consumption of Oil: shorturl.at/sKUX7
11. War and the Environment: shorturl.at/gBR49
12. Economic Cost of Military Empire: shorturl.at/FKQUZ
13. Chalmers Johnson on Empire and Democracy: shorturl.at/oAOY0

General Smedley Butler Describing the Nature of U.S. Imperialism (1933)
War is just a racket. A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of people. Only a small inside group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few at the expense of the masses.
I believe in adequate defense at the coastline and nothing else. If a nation comes over here to fight, then we’ll fight. The trouble with America is that when the dollar only earns 6 percent over here, then it gets restless and goes overseas to get 100 percent. Then the flag follows the dollar and the soldiers follow the flag. https://fas.org/man/smedley.htm

CONTACT CONGRESS

[Vote Alert] House amendment to restrain Trump on Iran
Dylan Williams, J Street Government Affairs <info@jstreet.org> Unsubscribe

Dick --

Tomorrow morning, the House will vote on legislation that could prevent Trump from launching a war with Iran.

We don’t need to tell you how important this is; only weeks ago, Trump had
planes in the air, ready for an attack that could have precipitated a full-on war.

This legislation makes it clear that Trump cannot launch such an attack without Congressional authorization. In fact, it forbids the use of a single penny for an attack on Iran without Congressional approval.[1]

This is our best hope for preventing another disastrous war of choice in the Middle East. So we’re asking you to contact Representative Steve Womack right now.

Tell Rep. Womack to prevent an unauthorized war with Iran by supporting the bipartisan Khanna-Gaetz amendment today >>

If the amendment passes the House today, Senate leadership will be under intense pressure to include it in the final version of the National Defense Authorization Act. Thanks to your calls and emails, we’ve already seen a majority of the Senate go on record in support.

This isn’t the end of the fight. But it is the moment when you can make the biggest difference.

Please, contact Rep. Womack now. You can send an email to his office here or -- if you have 60 seconds to make a call -- his number is (202) 225-4301. Simply say you are a constituent calling in support of the Khanna-Gaetz amendment.

Thanks for taking action.
Jeff Jurgens, Peace Action via bounce.myngp.com

Friend, did you see Jon’s email from last week? The House will be voting on the National Defense Authorization Act this week, and maybe as soon as tomorrow! If you took the time to email your representative at Jon’s urging, thank you so much! Now, we’re in the final sprint, with real opportunities to pass amendments that will improve U.S. foreign policy, and the time for one last action is here. Even if you emailed your representative, today I need you to call their offices to ensure they keep feeling the pressure!

Here's all I need you to do:

1) Call the Congressional Switchboard at 202-224-3121
2) Ask for your representative, and when connected say (in your own words as much as possible):
3) My name is _______________ and I'm calling as a voting constituent living at (your address). I am calling about the National Defense Authorization Act, and I urge the representative to support all efforts to cut wasteful Pentagon spending, and any amendments that help to end our country’s endless wars. Specifically, I urge the representative to support the Khanna-Gaetz Amendment #423 to prevent an unauthorized war with Iran. Additionally, I want the
representative to vote for the Khanna Amendment #217 to support diplomacy with North Korea. Thank you.
I know we’ve asked you to take multiple actions around this legislation, but it takes a massive outpouring to impact a three-quarter trillion dollar bill like the NDAA. Thank you so much for everything you’ve done to bend U.S foreign policy in a more progressive direction!
Sincerely,
Jeff Jurgens
Peace Action

CRITICISMS OF THE WAR

FROM THE INTERCEPT

EDITOR’S PICKS

Have We Learned Nothing From Iraq?

As provocations for war continue to bounce between the U.S. and Iran, the neoconservative dream of regime change in Tehran may soon take a catastrophic step forward. This week, our podcasts offer a stinging rebuke to America’s latest attempt at war.

On Intercepted, Jeremy Scahill examines the alleged attacks in the Gulf of Oman through the historical lens of the Gulf of Tonkin incident. And “Democracy Now” host Amy Goodman makes the case that the media must confront the lies designed to prime us for another senseless war.

Col. Lawrence Wilkerson — who helped sell the Iraq War and now regrets his role — joins Deconstructed host Mehdi Hasan to discuss the lessons of recent history. He says there is at least a 50-50 chance that the U.S. will go to war with Iran before the 2020 election.

Donald Trump, Iran, and the Gulf of Tonkin Redux

Rep. Ro Khanna, reporter Negar Mortazavi, and journalist Amy Goodman are this week’s guests.

LISTEN →
VETERANS FOR PEACE

Veterans For Peace firmly opposes U.S. attempts to increase tensions in the Persian Gulf and create the conditions for war against Iran.

The U.S. has created ongoing tensions with Iran by leaving the Iran Nuclear Deal, by imposing punishing economic sanctions, and by making questionable accusations against Iran. Veterans know first-hand how dangerous lies and exaggerations can lead the American public into war.

It is imperative that the U.S. immediately begins seeking diplomatic solutions to conflicts instead of creating pretexts for war. Veterans For Peace calls on the U.S. to:

- Draw down all its military forces from the Persian Gulf
- End its economic war against Iran, lifting sanctions immediately
- Re-join the six-country Iran Nuclear Deal
- End the 2001 Authorization of Use of Military Force (AUMF) that administration after administration has used to fund military expeditions around the globe under the guise of fighting the Islamophobic “War on Terror”

Read Veterans For Peace's Entire Statement

Fast Against U.S. Sanctions

Veterans For Peace member, Sally Alice Thompson has been Fasting Against Sanctions and Siege since June 16th. Sally is 95 years old and she is on a hunger strike for the child victims of the U.S. government's sanctions and war mongering on the countries where they live--Yemen, Syria, Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela.

Sally-Alice said, "I am fasting because I empathize with the many hungry children of the world, so I am joining them in their suffering. I am outraged that our country is engaging in sanctions and sieges that result in starvation of babies and children. I am profoundly saddened that my government interferes in the affairs of other countries, refusing to acknowledge their sovereignty and to respect their dignity."
She invites anyone who shares these feelings to join her in her fast, by skipping a meal or fasting for a day or longer. She would like to know if anyone joins her! Please contact her at sally-aliceanddon@juno.com.

**Take to the Streets!**

It's important to be visible during this time to show our opposition to war! Join in or initiate public protests or vigils against the war in Iran! If you do take action, please email press@veteransforpeace.org!

Veterans For Peace  1404 North Broadway Blvd. St. Louis, Missouri 63102  (314) 725-6005

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**War is hell**: as survivor of conflict, Rep. Ilhan Omar makes impassioned case against U.S. attack on Iran. Mronline.org (6-23-19).

Addressing President Donald Trump directly, the Minnesota congresswoman said, “Do not listen to the warmongers and war profiteers whispering in your ear.”

**Bernie Sanders Burns Trump on Iran Strike: ‘It’s Like Setting a Fire, Then Putting It Out’**

“He helped create the crisis and then he stopped the attacks,” the candidate said


**The Iranian People Are Not Our Enemy**

By DANIEL LARISON • June 20, 2019, 9:51 PM

Ardeshir Zahedi and Ali Vaez have written a very thoughtful and important op-ed pleading for a change in U.S. Iran policy before it is too late: .

Bullying and crude threats will achieve little beyond entangling the United States and the region in another senseless war while deepening the two countries’ 40-year estrangement. The United States should strive for an Iran that is stable with a strong middle class and highly educated youths connected to the moderating influence of the outside world [bold mine-DL]. The Iranian people want to restore the friendship between Iran
and the United States, two countries that enjoyed 123 years of cordial ties before 1979. But
the path to their hearts and minds is not through sanctions and military intervention. Our policy
should never be to suffocate the civilian population of another country with ruinous sanctions.
In addition to being unjust and cruel, it hardens attitudes against the U.S. and provokes
stronger resistance. No genuine U.S. interests are served by immiserating tens of millions of
people for the actions of their government, and by inflicting collective punishment on an entire
nation our government commits a terrible injustice that should shame us all. If the Iranian
people are not our enemy, we must halt the economic war our government is waging
against them and pursue a course of diplomatic and economic engagement instead. MORE
https://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/the-iranian-people-are-not-our-enemy/?
fbclid=IwAR1XmplbjT1-G-MK9yofRAHkUZEnQGrLwV_PykslWmETHMCMyomEm_mt4sM

OUR TWO PARTIES AND IRAN

JULIANNE TVETEN Any Democrat Who Wants to Be President Should
Reject War with Iran, Not Hide Behind Process Criticisms. In
These Times (June 22, 2019).

US EMPIRE VIA ECONOMIC SIEGE WARFARE

Starvation Sanctions Are Worse Than Overt Warfare
https://caitlinjohnstone.com/2019/06/23/starvation-sanctions-are-worse-than-overt-warfare/
CAITLIN JOHNSTONE. JUNE 23, 2019.
“We are putting major additional Sanctions on Iran on Monday,” President
Trump tweeted today. “I look forward to the day that Sanctions come off Iran, and they
become a productive and prosperous nation again – The sooner the better!”
Iran’s economy is already floundering due to the steadily mounting sanctions that the
Trump administration has been heaping upon it since its withdrawal from the JCPOA last year.
Crucial goods are four times the price they used to be, sick Iranians are having difficulty
obtaining life-saving medicine, and life in general has been getting much more difficult for
the poorest and frailest Iranian civilians.

For this reason, it is a very safe bet that there have been Iranians who have died because of
the sanctions. Being unable to obtain enough life-saving medicine will inevitably increase
mortality rates, as will inadequate nutrition and care for those whose health is at risk. There’s
not really any way around that, and it’s only going to get worse.
And that's exactly what was supposed to happen. As far as their intended purpose is concerned, the sanctions are working. They’re doing exactly what they were intended to do: hurt Iranian civilians.

How do I know this? Well for one thing America’s Secretary of State has said it openly. The New York Times reports the following:

Last week, Mr. Pompeo acknowledged to Michael J. Morrell, a former acting director of the C.I.A., that the administration’s strategy would not persuade Iranian leaders to change their behavior.

“I think what can change is the people can change the government,” he said on a podcast hosted by Mr. Morrell, in what appeared to be an endorsement of regime change. The Trump administration isn’t leveling these sanctions because it believes they’ll cause Tehran to capitulate to Washington’s impossible list of demands; they know full well that that will never happen. What they claim, based on no evidence or historical precedent whatsoever, is that by making life so painful for the hungry and malnourished Iranian people they’ll be forced to rise up against their government to effect regime change themselves.

Can you think of anything more sociopathic than this? Off the top of my head, I personally cannot.

Donald J. Trump
✓@realDonaldTrump
· Jun 21, 2019
President Obama made a desperate and terrible deal with Iran - Gave them 150 Billion Dollars plus 1.8 Billion Dollars in CASH! Iran was in big trouble and he bailed them out. Gave them a free path to Nuclear Weapons, and SOON. Instead of saying thank you, Iran yelled.....

Donald J. Trump
✓@realDonaldTrump
....Death to America. I terminated deal, which was not even ratified by Congress, and imposed strong sanctions. They are a much weakened nation today than at the beginning of my Presidency, when they were causing major problems throughout the Middle East. Now they are Bust!....
8:03 AM - Jun 21, 2019

What does is say about MSM that Fox News is the only MSM outlet to have covered the @ceprdc study showing that US sanctions have killed 40,000 Venezuelans? NYT, WaPo, MSNBC and CNN have all ignored it and promoted murderous sanctions and regime change.
https://twitter.com/Dan_Beeton/status/1125872190442885120 ...

Dan Beeton@Dan_Beeton 7:32 AM - May 8, 2019

Nice write-up of our report on the lethal US #sanctions against #Venezuela, from #FoxNews. "A top economist who has worked for years with the UN is claiming that US sanctions are
responsible for more than 40,000 deaths in Venezuela and...are illegal"
https://fxn.ws/2JoGTy3

It's great that more people are starting to understand the cost of war, to the extent that we’re even seeing US presidential candidates make opposing it central to their platforms, but this is happening at a time when overt warfare is becoming more obsolete and replaced with something subtler and more sinister. We must as a society evolve our understanding of what starvation sanctions are and what they do, and stop seeing them as in any way superior or preferable to overt warfare.

The fact that people generally oppose senseless military violence but are unable to see and comprehend a slow, boa constrictor-like act of slaughter via economic strangulation is why these siege warfare tactics have become the weapon of choice for the US-centralized empire. It is a more gradual way of murdering people than overt warfare, but when you control all the resources and have an underlying power structure which maintains itself amid the comings and goings of your officially elected government, you’re in no hurry. The absence of any public accountability makes the need for patience a very worthwhile trade-off.

So you see this siege warfare strategy employed everywhere by the US-centralized empire:

- You see it with Iran and Venezuela.
- You see it in Yemen, where in addition to deadly blockades the Saudis have been deliberate targeting farms, fishing boats, marketplaces, food storage sites and cholera treatment centers with US-assisted airstrikes.
- You see it in North Korea, where boats full of dead people have been washing up on Japan’s shores because fishermen get stuck out at sea trying to catch food since they can’t afford enough fuel to get back to shore, which former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson attributed to US sanctions.
- You see it in Gaza, where people are being deprived of an adequate amount of nutrients due to an Israeli blockade designed to “put the Palestinians on a diet”.
- You saw it with Julian Assange, where Ecuador collaborated with the US to slowly make life in the embassy more and more hellish in the hope that he’d step outside to be arrested by British police.
- You’re seeing it now with Chelsea Manning, who is currently racking up $500 a day fines for her principled stand against a corrupt grand jury proceeding against Assange, fines which will double next month to $1,000 a day.

The US-centralized power alliance is so powerful in its ability to hurt nations with financial influence that in 1990 when Yemen voted against a UN Security Council Resolution authorizing the attack against Iran, a senior US diplomat was caught on a hot mic telling the Yemeni ambassador, “That will be the most expensive ‘no’ vote you ever cast.” According to German author Thomas Pogge, “The US stopped $70 million in aid to Yemen; other Western countries, the IMF, and World Bank followed suit. Saudi Arabia expelled some
800,000 Yemeni workers, many of whom had lived there for years and were sending urgently needed money to their families."

That's real power. Not the ability to destroy a nation with bombs and missiles, but the ability to destroy it without firing a shot.

It’s no wonder, then, that the drivers of this empire work so hard to continue growing and expanding it. The oligarchs and their allies in opaque government agencies no doubt envision a world where all noncompliant nations like Iran, Russia and China have been absorbed into the blob of empire and war becomes obsolete, not because anyone has become any less violent, but because their economic control will be so complete that they can obliterate entire populations just by cutting them off from the world economy whenever any of them become disobedient.

This is the only reason Iran is being targeted right now. That's why you'll never hear a factually and logically sound argument defending Trump’s withdrawal from the nuclear deal; there is none. There was no problem with the JCPOA other than the fact that it barred America from inflicting economic warfare upon Iran, which it needed for the purpose of toppling the nation’s government so that it can be absorbed into the blob of the US-centralized empire.

And all the innocent human beings who die of starvation and disease? They don’t matter. Imperial violence only matters if there are consequences for it. The price of shoring up the total hegemony of the empire will have been worth it.

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END IRAN NEWSLETTER #29, June 21, 2019
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