FACT SHEET
WAR ENDANGERS US

There is a common perception that wars keep us safe, but in fact, war, and preparations for war, endanger more than protect. War has a history of provoking more war, not peace.

VIOLENCE PROVOKES VIOLENCE

According to the Global Terrorism Index, terrorism actually increased during the so-called "war on terror." "The past decade has experienced the largest surge in terrorist activity in the past fifty years.[1]" Numerous journalists, federal intelligence analysts, and former military officials have suggested that U.S. military interventions, including the drone program, may actually cause an increase in terrorist strength and activity, generating more violence than they prevent.[2] Research from Peace Science Digest shows that the deployment of troops and weapons exports to another country increase the chance of attacks from terror organizations from that country.[3]

According to a declassified intelligence report on the war on Iraq, "despite serious damage to the leadership of al- Qaida, the threat from Islamic extremists has spread both in numbers and in geographic reach.[4]" Likewise, a 2015 analysis by Georgetown University student Emily Manna shows a positive correlation between U.S. drone strikes and terrorist attacks in Pakistan.[5]

Photo Credit: California Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Neil Ballecer

General Stanley McChrystal, then commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan told Rolling Stone in June 2010 that "for every innocent person you kill, you create 10 new enemies.[6]" U.S. General James E. Cartwright, former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said, "If you're trying to kill your way to a solution, no matter how precise

you are, you're going to upset people even if they're not targeted.'" Bruce Riedel, who coordinated a review of Afghanistan policy for U.S. President Obama in 2010 said, "The pressure we've put on [jihadist forces] in the past year has also drawn them together, meaning that the network of alliances is growing stronger not weaker." "Continued U.S. military action will inevitably drive terrorist activities in [the U.S.], because some local people here will identify themselves with the victims of those actions abroad," says Marc Sageman, a former CIA officer and author of Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century. A 2012 study by the FBI confirmed that anger over U.S. military operations abroad was the most commonly cited motivation for individuals involved in cases of "homegrown" terrorism[8].

A 2013 Gallup poll of 65 nations found the United States to be considered the largest threat to peace in the world, underscoring the hatred and blowback that results from U.S. war-making[9].

WAR COMES HOME

While wars are fought in the name of "supporting" those fighting in the wars, veterans are given little assistance in dealing with the deep moral guilt, trauma, brain injury, and other hurdles in the way of adapting to nonviolent society. In fact, U.S. mass shooters are disproportionately military veterans. While veterans account for 13% of the U.S. adult population, more than 1/3 of adult perpetrators of the 43 worst mass killings between 1984 and 2006 had served in the U.S. military[10]. Furthermore, a 2015 study in the Annals of Epidemiology found that veterans kill themselves at a rate 50% higher than their civilian counterparts[11]. This speaks volumes about the damaging psychological impact of war.

RISK OF NUCLEAR APOCALYPSE

Approximately 17,300 nuclear weapons are presently deployed in at least 9 countries, many of which can be launched and reach their targets within 45 minutes. An accidental missile launch could lead to the greatest global public health disaster in recorded history.[12] A war using fewer than half the nuclear weapons of India and Pakistan would lift so much black soot and soil into the air that it would cause a nuclear winter.[13]

In his book Command and Control, author Eric Schlosser documents how nuclear weapons provide what he calls an "illusion of safety," while, in fact posing real danger, due to the threat of accidental detonation. Schlosser documents how hundreds of incidents involving nuclear weapons have nearly destroyed our world through accident, confusion, or misunderstanding.[14]

War, and ongoing preparations for war, are counterproductive to our safety.

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worldbeyondwar.org/endangers

World BEYOND War is a global grassroots network of volunteers, activists, and allied organizations advocating for the abolition of war and its replacement with an alternative global security system based on peace and demilitarization. Visit WorldBEYONDWar.org to join the global movement to end all wars.

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