

Who's MAWO?

Mobilization Against War and Occupation is a coalition of over 50 endorsing organizations and also individual members, most of which are working class organizations, student groups, grassroots organizations, and ethnic communities. This is including Indigenous activists and groups from the third world as well as women, youth and elder fighters for social justice and against war and occupation. We are the people in struggle because we are people that suffer at the hands of imperialism. We have the energy, drive and will for change because it is in our interest to make this change in order to create a better world for all of humanity!

Get involved



with MAWO!

Meetings & Forums on Tuesdays - 7:00PM

For location, please visit our website:

mawovancouver.org

@MAWOvan

Mobilization Against War and Occupation

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stop the war! stop the occupations!

www.mawovancouver.org

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mobilization against war & occupation

Stop Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia! The Liberal Government Continues The Harper Government's Policies

By Janine Solanki

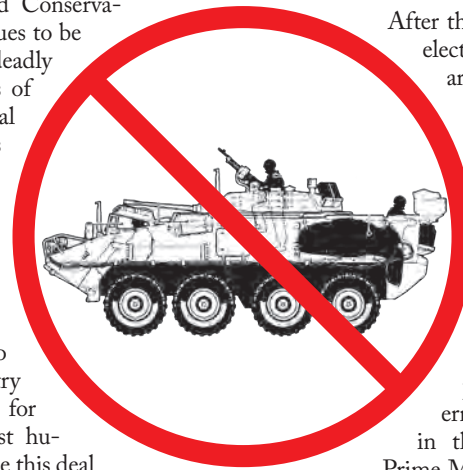
Stop Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia! Liberal Government Continues Harper Government Policies

In November 2015, the Liberal government under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau came to power with the catchphrase that "Canada is back". Back from where and to what is up to interpretation, but one thing is for sure – Canada under past and current Liberal and Conservative governments continues to be the country which puts deadly weapons into the hands of some of the most brutal and tyrannical regimes in the world.

In 2014 under the Conservative Harper government, a \$15-billion deal was struck to sell "Light Armoured Vehicles" or LAVs to Saudi Arabia, a country that is world-renowned for having one of the worst human rights records. While this deal received some criticism when initially signed, it has now received renewed opposition as the new Liberal government refuses to cancel the deal.

For every argument made against the sale of the military vehicles, the Liberal government has defended their decision with justifications which

really don't add up. Even before being elected as Prime Minister, in October 2015 Justin Trudeau tried to downplay the arms deal as the sale of mere "jeeps" to Saudi Arabia. However despite the deceiving name of "Light Armoured Vehicles" a Globe and Mail investigation found that these military vehicles will be equipped with machine guns, medium- or high-calibre weapons or even big-barrel guns that can fire 105mm shells or anti-tank missiles.



After the Liberal government was elected the opposition to this arms deal increased. On February 18, 2016 Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion made the contradictory statement that "the government doesn't approve this contract. The government simply refuses to terminate a contract that has already been approved by the former government." On May 11, 2016 in the House of Commons, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau defended his decision to uphold the deal with the excuse, "We need to be able to project [to] the world that when Canada agrees to something, it sticks to its word"

If Canada's word is the issue here, then why isn't the government of Canada upholding it's own

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MAWO Newsletter #59 Created by: Janine Solanki, Ali Yerevani, Azza Rojbi

UPCOMING EVENTS ENDORSED BY MAWO:

LIFT the U.S. BLOCKADE on GUBA NOW!

RETURN GUANTANAMO TO CUBA NOW!

Monthly Protest Action!

FRIDAY JUNE 17 4-5 PM

U.S. CONSULATE 1075 W. PENDER ST.

FRIENDS OF CUBA AGAINST THE U.S. BLOCKADE.VANCOUVER.Nobloguo/Vancouver@gmail.com | @NOBLOCKOVAN WWW.VANCUBA.VSBLOCKADE.ORG

U.S. HANDS OFF VENEZUELA

FRIDAY JUNE 10

PROTEST ACTION: PETITION DRIVE - INFO DISPLAY: MADURO IS OUR PRESIDENT! VENEZUELA! 5:30-7PM VANCOUVER ART GALLERY 4-5PM U.S. CONSULATE 1075 W. PENDER ST. DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER, CANADA

Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice (FTT) VENEZUELA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN WWW.FIRETHISTIME.NET



MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION - MAWO
WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG

SATURDAY JUNE 18 2PM
VANCOUVER ART GALLERY
ROBSON STREET AT HOWE STREET
DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER, BC

MONTHLY ANTIWAR PETITION DRIVE & RALLY

**CANADA: CANCEL THE ARMS DEAL WITH SAUDI ARABIA!
US/UK/CANADA HANDS OFF LIBYA!
US/UK/CANADA/France/NATO:
NO TO WAR ON SYRIA, IRAQ AND AFGHANISTANI
SAUDI ARABIA HANDS OFF YEMEN, SYRIA AND IRAQ!
CANADA OUT OF IRAQ! CANADA OUT OF AFGHANISTANI
TURKEY OUT OF SYRIA AND IRAQ!**

**NO TO ISLAMOPHOBIA!
ISRAEL HANDS OFF PALESTINE!
END THE OCCUPATION NOW!
END THE BLOCKADE OF CUBA!
LIFT ALL SANCTIONS AGAINST IRANI!
NO TO WAR & OCCUPATION!
YES TO SELF-DETERMINATION!**

The New Era of War and Occupation and the Necessity of Building an Antiwar Movement

MAWO discusses and protests Islamophobia and imperialist aggression at home and abroad

By Janine Solanki

Since the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, our world has been defined by a new era of war and occupation. Year after year we have seen yet another country invaded and occupied as we have seen in Iraq, or subjected to military intervention such as in Libya. We have seen sanctions imposed on countries resistant to foreign domination such as Iran, and imperialist backed mercenaries wreak havoc in Syria and tear the country apart. We have seen drone wars silently terrorize innocent people in Pakistan, Yemen, Afghanistan and Somalia. Today we see that the result of constant war, occupation and imperialist arming of so-called "moderate rebels" and mercenaries has created the rise of the terrorist organization Daesh. Now the US and their allies have a new justification to wage war on Iraq, Syria and Libya, with the tired claim of fighting terror once again. All of this death, destruction and devastation has been part of the new era of war and occupation conducted by the US government and their allies such as Canada, the UK and France. While imperialist governments -such as Canada- and mainstream media outlets would like you to believe that this is part of a "war on terror", the truth is that it is a war OF terror, in order to save a failing capitalist economic system with a band-aid fix of plundered resources and new markets.

It isn't difficult to see the brutality of these wars and occupations. So then how does the US and their allies -like Canada- get away with carrying out these bloody crimes? The answer is with the age-old tactic of fear and division, today seen in the form of Islamophobia. Mainstream media and rhetoric from imperialist politicians skillfully deceive the general public into believing that they are in imminent danger of Islamic terror and that Muslims are to be feared. Once that fear is gripping someone's sense of reality, it is a lot easier to carry out their wars and occupations. This is a tool in the war abroad, but also carried out in the war at home. If people in the US, Canada and other Western countries were united and not taken over by racism and fear, then maybe we would focus on more important things. Like why is the government of Canada or the US not investing in education, healthcare, housing and employment, instead of spending billions or even trillions of dollars on war, occupation and destruction of other nations? How is it that these governments can introduce laws which cut back on our human and democratic rights

and get away with it? If racism and fear, and especially now Islamophobia, were not used to divide people here at home, I think we would see more people of all faiths and backgrounds, ages and ethnicities organizing together for our rights and against war. And that is a very scary thing for imperialist governments which rely on the complacency of their populations.

As the only truly active antiwar coalition in Vancouver, Canada, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) has the responsibility of countering the Islamophobic lies and media manipulation. We may not have mainstream media on our side, but what we do have is the truth, and from discussion to protest we are speaking truth to power. On Wednesday May 18, MAWO organized a community forum titled, "Islamophobia: the War at Home, Why Imperialist Governments Use Racism and Fear." The forum speakers included Mamdoh Ashir, Iraqi-Canadian and Muslim community social justice organizer; Wala Zaidan, an Iraqi high school student and poet; Azza Rojbi, a North African social justice organizer from Tunisia and executive member of MAWO, as well as Thomas Davies, an organizer with the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 which is demanding a full repeal of Canada's so-called "anti-terrorism" law. Following the insightful presentations from the panel, there was a lively discussion between participants on how to work together to defeat Islamophobia.

On Saturday May 28 MAWO took to the streets with slogans against war and Islamophobia, with an antiwar rally and petition campaign in Downtown Vancouver. Protesters talked to many people who stopped to sign petitions against Canada's participation in the war on Syria and Iraq, as well as to demand that Canada end its arms deal with Saudi Arabia. These actions, which combine public outreach and protest, have been organized monthly by MAWO over the last 13 years. MAWO will continue bringing antiwar demands to the streets of Vancouver until this new era of war and occupation is stopped. MAWO encourages all peace-loving people to join in standing up against war, occupation and Islamophobia.

Check out www.mawovancouver.org and @mawovan for upcoming events and actions, and get involved!

**NO TO WAR AND OCCUPATION,
YES TO SELF-DETERMINATION!
NO TO ISLAMOPHOBIA!**

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regulations? This arms deal is creating so much controversy because it goes against Canada's own laws which restrict export permits for weapons sales to countries with poor human rights records "unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable risk that the goods might be used against the civilian population." This article will go further into the many ways which Saudi Arabia is renowned for their abysmal human rights record, but first lets see how Trudeau and Dion defended themselves against the most direct evidence that should enact their own regulations and stop the export of arms to Saudi Arabia. On May 11, 2016 The Globe and Mail released video footage from 2012 and 2015 which shows similar models of Light Armoured Vehicles being used to violently attack civilians in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province, home to large populations of the suppressed Shia minority. Ali Adubsi, director of the Berlin-based European-Saudi Organization for Human Rights, says Saudi authorities have deployed armoured vehicles against Shia civilians in Eastern Province more than 15 times since 2011. Upon being questioned about the video footage, Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion still defended the sale of the military vehicles to Saudi Arabia, claiming that "The fundamental point is that this is not Canadian military equipment" in the video footage. If Saudi Arabia is using non-Canadian made LAVs against civilians, I would say this is enough evidence that the Canadian sale of LAVs will be used against civilians too, especially as they are being sold to the Saudi Arabian National Guard, the force that deals with "internal threats".

Stéphane Dion's claim that the agreement was a done deal and could not be canceled was yet another embarrassing lie by the Liberal government. It came to light that on April 8, 2016 Stéphane Dion signed off on export permits to ship \$11 billion worth of the \$15-billion military vehicle sale. In the process of a military arms deal, the sanctioning of Canadian arms exports is a decision which is not supposed to be affected by whether a contract is already signed, and there is no guarantee that a sale is officially approved until permit applications are approved. This approval was a decision made under the Liberal government, signed by the Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion.

With all of the government's justifications exposed, Trudeau and Dion are now playing the card that they simply can't pass up the opportunity of jobs that this deal will create. The contract is projected to create 3,000 jobs over 14 years. This number is hardly going to have a huge effect on the unemployment rate in Canada. Besides, do we create jobs at the expense of humanity? While the government of Canada may think this is an excuse, people in Canada do not think this is morally justifiable. In a poll by Nanos Research for The Globe and Mail, "nearly six out of 10 respondents said human rights should trump job creation when it comes to Canada's export policy. In the survey of 1,000 Canadians from Jan. 30-Feb. 1, 87% of respondents say they have a negative, or "somewhat negative opinion" of the authoritarian Saudi regime." People in Canada want jobs, but they want honest and dignified jobs, not jobs making weapons to fuel the imperialist war machine.

Who is Saudi Arabia?

It is pretty difficult to justify the good intentions Saudi Arabia might have in their use of military vehicles, considering both their internal human rights record and foreign policy.

Saudi Arabia is a country devoid of democratic institutions, and is in fact an absolute monarchy where decisions are made by the ruling family and their clique. Saudi Arabia has one of the highest execution rates in the world which is currently skyrocketing. A total of 158 people were killed by death penalty in 2015, and according to Amnesty International most were beheaded or killed by firing squad, with the bodies sometimes displayed in public after the executions. As of May 29, 2016, the 95th execution this year was carried out. This increasing rate includes the largest mass execution in the country since 1980, when 47 men were put to death on January 2nd, 2016. Among those executed was Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr, a prominent Shia cleric convicted of vague charges, which according to Human Rights Watch were based largely on his peaceful criticism of Saudi officials.

Basic human and democratic rights are denied in Saudi Arabia. The existence of political parties, trade unions or independent human rights groups are not permitted, and all public gatherings, including peaceful demonstrations, remain prohibited under an order issued by the Ministry of the Interior in 2011. Those who seek

to defy the ban face arrest, prosecution and imprisonment on charges such as "inciting people against the authorities". In March 2016, the regime warned that it would arrest and prosecute anyone who publicly criticized Saudi Arabia's military actions in Yemen.

Women's rights in Saudi Arabia are practically non-existent. To name just a few restrictions women face, women must be accompanied by a male chaperon to go outside of their home and do not have the freedom to travel, open a bank account, or do many other basic things without their husband's or guardian's permission. Women are prohibited from driving, despite heroic protests to defy the driving ban.

For decades, particularly over the last 30 years, Saudi Arabia has played an important role as a client of Western imperialism in the Middle East. From allowing US military bases to operate in Saudi Arabia, to militarily intervening in favour of US interests, Saudi Arabia is an important ally as the US expands their hegemony and new era of war and occupation in the Middle East and North Africa. In 2011 during popular uprisings in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia sent in troops, tanks and the famous Light Armoured Vehicles to violently suppress the peaceful protests. Reports assert that these LAV's were Canadian-made, a claim to which the government of Canada has responded with a weak assertion that "it doesn't believe the vehicles were used to combat protests" according to The Globe and Mail. In neighboring Yemen, since March 26, 2015 Saudi Arabia has carried out a bombing campaign and outright war against the people of Yemen, resulting in a humanitarian crisis and the deaths of approximately 8,500 people as of April 2016.

Saudi Arabia has had a big role to play in the US-fomented civil war in Syria over the last five years. While the US government was initially trying to deny involvement in backing mercenaries in Syria, Saudi Arabia did their dirty work. In June 2012 The Guardian released reports that Saudi Arabia was putting so-called Syrian rebels on a Saudi payroll to fight against the legitimate government of Syria. Since then, media reports point to arms and funds flowing from Saudi Arabia to mercenaries and groups including Daesh (also known as ISIS/ISIL).

Who is Canada?

Take away Canada's friendly public relations campaign and the honeymoon of a new Prime Minister, and Canada is what it is. That is, an imperialist country with a foreign policy driven by capitalist interests. In its arms deal with Saudi Arabia, the government of Canada doesn't care about jobs or keeping its good word. It cares about a business deal that enhances Canada's reputation as key player in the new era of war and occupation unfolding today. That is, a weapons manufacturer and supplier that keeps this war drive rolling and profits from it. Saudi Arabia's human rights records may be unsavory to peace-loving people in Canada, but to the government of Canada Saudi Arabia as a key ally, one that they would like to see sufficiently armed to keep down dissent both at home in Saudi Arabia and throughout the region.

This is nothing new for Canada. Since 2001 Canada has played a key role in the war and occupation of Afghanistan. Soon after Canada's involvement in Afghanistan began, the mask of peacekeeping came off with the words of Canada's former top general and Chief of Defense Staff Rick Hillier, who in 2005 said that Canada was in Afghanistan fighting "detestable murderers and scumbags," and that the job of the Canadian Forces was "to kill people".

In the war in Iraq, from the beginning in 2003 Canada had a role in supplying weapons, alongside providing naval and military personnel support. Canada was the largest foreign supplier of arms to the US for the war in Iraq. In 2004 the Canadian corporation SNC-Lavalin had a 5-year contract to supply the US Army with 300-500 million bullets per year.

Peace-loving people in Canada aren't fooled

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion can make all the excuses they like, but peace-loving people in Canada aren't buying their lies on the arms deal with Saudi Arabia. Working and poor people in Canada must come together to demand that the Liberal government stop selling arms to Saudi Arabia, and to dismantle Canada's arms industry altogether. People in Canada want dignified jobs, not jobs that are at the expense of human life, for weapons manufactures profiting off the blood of others. Money must spent for social welfare and well being of people not for killing of innocent people around the world.

**PRIME MINISTER JUSTIN TRUDEAU,
CANCEL THE ARMS DEAL WITH
SAUDI ARABIA!**

ANOTHER GREAT DEPRESSION

A POEM BY WALA ZAIDAN

We are still living in another great depression

But so silent and innocent

Dominating every vein in our body, enslaving our minds

Truth has become an illness.

We are trapped into these four walls

Built by false promotions

Filled with greed, wanting and absorbing everything

Just so your soul screams enough!

We are no longer feeding our minds with knowledge

Rather than money and power

To fulfill our hungry desires

Our minds has become anorexic

Forcibly feeding it shame

We are living in another great depression

Enslaved by TV screens,

Believing it without any question

Green papers has become another obsession

We are secretly prisoners carrying our royal kings to heaven

War has become another sort of art

Just sit back and enjoy the depression

Depression crawling back to our minds, Consuming every affection

I don't blame you when you hate

It's all about wisdom v.s power

That's why the truth buries his nose under his book

That's why the society calls him crazy and liar

That's why the needy is forgotten, to the point he buried his hopes in fire

That's why the liar adores the mic, with his loud and ignorant logic,

It killed the truth by making it choke itself with the wire

In hopes to light up the candle brighter

I am not asking you to feel but to wake up.

We are still living in another great depression

But so silent and innocent

When will we ever learn from our lessons?