

THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN: 18 YEARS AND COUNTING (With Very Little Attention Paid)

Eighteen years ago, on October 7th, 2001, Congress approved the invasion of Afghanistan. Since then, U.S. military spending on this war has totaled approximately \$2 trillion. This U.S. invasion **started the longest war in modern U.S. history. The total estimated number of people killed since the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan is 147,000.**

The United States has spent an estimated \$5.9 trillion and counting on post 9-11 endless wars, with the war in Afghanistan costing an estimated \$45 billion each year. Hundreds of thousands of lives have been lost on all sides in these post-9/11 wars, and hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars spent. *For what?*

This war, which is just one part of a four-decade long conflict, has impacted the Afghan people in almost every capacity, and has had dire consequences on their quality of life. Among these consequences: 2 million people suffer from depression and anxiety disorders; an estimated 3.7 million children are out of school in Afghanistan (60% of whom are girls); 8.5 million Afghans have been displaced in the past four decades; and 2.9 to 3.6 million people in Afghanistan are users of drugs like opium and heroin.

(Source: <https://winwithoutwar.org/policy/the-war-in-afghanistan-18-years-and-counting/>)

[President Trump] made absolutely no mention of Afghanistan on the anniversary of the war. But neither did most members of Congress.

There was a near blackout of the anniversary in the media as well. Of the major newspapers, only the *New York Times* paid some attention to it with a lengthy special called “We Are Inside the Fire: An Oral History of the war in Afghanistan.” While the report centered on the voices of Afghans, [it] minimized the role of the U.S. For example, the first section covering 1989 to 2001 was described in this way: “After the Soviet occupation, Afghanistan fell into a civil war between factions that were mostly bound by personal loyalties.” **The *Times* did not see fit to add the civil war was largely fueled by U.S. weapons and cash flooding into the hands of anti-Soviet Jihadi warlords the CIA had deployed against the USSR. Those warlords and weapons set the stage for the Taliban and the brutality that followed.** Still, the Afghan voices in the narrative consistently mentioned the futility of the U.S. war, with one doctor in Kandahar saying:

“It would be better if Americans had never come here. Fewer people would have died. This war is not Afghanistan’s war; it is the war of the world, but they are fighting it in Afghanistan.”

All that Trump has done since he took office is increase the number of U.S. troops that had been serving, at least initially, and most recently walk away without warning from the years-long effort to sign a peace deal with the Taliban.

(Source: Article by Sonali Kolhatkar at <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2019/10/10/war-afghanistan-turns-18-and-no-one-notices>; emphases added.)

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JOIN US TO RESIST THIS ENDLESS WAR!
<https://newhavensundayvigil.wordpress.com>

Since 1999, the New Haven Sunday Vigil has been held here every week from 12-1pm at Broadway, Park and Elm Streets in New Haven, CT, to emphatically say NO to the state of permanent, ongoing war against the world being waged by our government and its allies, a war which is terrorizing the planet and destroying lives in order to consolidate enormous power and wealth in the hands of a very few people.

Often people ask us what we mean when we say, “RESIST THIS ENDLESS WAR.” We mean that the serial wars fought by the US and its allies are really one war being waged on many fronts. Men, women and children are being slaughtered, maimed, traumatized, and driven from their homes all over the world.

The weapons of this war include: continued development and production of an ever more deadly nuclear arsenal; aerial drone attacks against human beings many thousands of miles away; mass deportations of immigrants and refugees; systemic dismantling of infrastructure and social programs; destruction of the environment; undermining workers’ rights; refusal to pass a national minimum living wage.

This state of endless war is escalating on all its fronts. With its blatantly racist and xenophobic rhetoric and policies and its disregard for the U.S. Constitution and international law, the Trump administration has made transparent the existential threat posed by the 1% to all our lives and to the future of our planet.