A human rights lecture Zoom event organized by members of the San Jose State Human Rights Institute on Wednesday featured two panelists for a discussion on US militarism.

The San Jose State Human Rights Institute (HRRI) gathered two panelists for a US militarism discussion Wednesday on Zoom. Experts talked about new approaches to global goals including peace and security. HRRI is a research and policy organization that produces scholarly research, policy analysis for the public and policy makers, design policy, decision research, human rights and public policy and educational-student opportunities.

By Eva Martin

Ukrainian “nazis” also illustrates the threat of weapons of mass destruction seen as useful and safe.

“Militarism is an ideology,” Crawford said. “Militarism is seen as the ‘host option’ confronting threats because of the fear that others have.”

She said there are many beliefs regarding militarism to the idea that security is a scarce resource. If one side acts to increase its security, it would make the other more vulnerable, she said.

Then, she said militarism implies an overestimate of the military force utility and controllability and is seen as useful and safe.

Crawford and Sarwary said the idea of preventive war began during the Cold War in 2005 by identifying first strikes and preventive war, even as it would make the other more hostile, they said. “They hate you and what you do,” she said.

“Decision-makers tend to overestimate others’ potential regarding successful use of force, justifying the use of more military resources. She called it the “Powers-worshipers.”

“This is both conscious and unconscious threat-inflation,” Crawford said. Economic benefits of military spending are exaggerated, and the economic cost of war tends to be understated, Crawford said.

Finally, the human and environmental cost is forgotten from the official discourse before wars begin, she said.

Sarwary, the second panelist, worked in Afghanistan for 20 years after 9/11, and said he witnessed errors made by the US military intervention there.

“We lost count of all those tragic and sad incidents, and many were attacked by US forces from the American military,” Sarwary said, mentioning atrocities and shows that he believes were unjustified by the US military.

He referred to the US surprise attack on a medical charity hospital in Afghanistan after its crew identified the hospital for a commercial take-over by the Taliban. It killed at least 35 civilians and 28 others, according to Nov. 25, 2015, NBC News article. According to an Aug. 16, 2021 Associated Press article, the Afghanistan War caused 47,245 civilian deaths.

Crawford said all military badness described were on display in the post-9/11 wars, in Iraq, Afghanistan and in Russia’s current invasion of Ukraine.

She said militarism is threatening democracy, as war and democracy are normative opposites. “Democracy says that we must take force from the table and resolve our disputes nonviolently,” Crawford said. “In war, information and decision making power is concentrated, legislatures are sidelined in the name of secrecy and speed.”

Similar to Crawford, Sarwary said the window for negotiated settlement with the Taliban after 9/11 was closed deliberately because the Americans felt they had tried to settle things and abided by all “sense of revenge.”

Crawford said after 9/11, there were other ways to put political and economic pressure on the Taliban, but it was perceived as “too slow.”

“While neither had attacked all, and people are fearful and angry, we must speak on threats and looks for ways to respond to those threats,” Crawford said. “The American public was not prepared, because it is so militarized, to think about other tools and to support those who were advocating other tools.”

Sarwary said the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan was a “monumental failure on everyone’s part in the world” as the U.S. and Afghan taxpayer money had been used.

He said many misunderstandings could have been avoided if more Americans spoke in Putin’s and Dari, which are both official Afghan languages.

“I think there’s also this lack of understanding of who the people are, I agree completely,” Crawford said.

Ariana Shah, global studies sophomore and Human Rights Institute intern attended the Zoom lecture and said it was a chance to have Afghan journalists, including Sarwary and Halima Kazem-Stojanovic, in this discussion, because she felt the Afghan perspective is missing in the U.S. perception of Afghanistan events.

“We just don’t know about it after America, and it’s really unfortunate. We don’t know that much about these crises. Shah said. “I think students should really become more aware and not only are we less being affected, but less affected, especially overseas.”

Both panelists during the lecture also spoke about the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine.

“I am looking at the Russian invasion of Ukraine and what’s happening in Ukraine, I feel that the real bear trap is in Ukraine for the Russians,” they said. “We will be stuck there.”

Crawford said the Russian nuclear threat should be taken seriously, because “we’ve got thousands of nuclear weapons remaining in the world and that . . . should be a lesson to us.”

She said negotiators ending this war should avoid mistakes made in Afghanistan, where the Afghan government was missing from the negotiating table with Taliban, since the US and other Western powers.

The U.S. foreign policy military also has consequences in its own territory, Crawford said.

She said the police in the US have a disproportionate share of force whose fear of civilians or potential may be active in the reserves, bringing militarism back in the police-officer mentality.

Police or military budget reduction creates the same “allergic reaction” saying without more, effects are not reflective, she said.

Crawford and Sarwary said that US militaristic interventions are “imposing the same pattern” of mistakes again and again.

“Unfortunately, there are some people in the United States who don’t want to look critically at American history, military and otherwise . . . this is because it conflicts with their idea of what it means to be a U.S. citizen or an American,” Crawford said. “And no doubt, you’ll have to get over that and recognize that this moment is possibly the great moment that we’ve got to go forward . . . we’re going to go further.”

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Neta Crawford
Boston University political science department chair and professor

Bilal Sarwary
Independent scholar and journalist
"We draw a lot of inspiration from the sports card industry," Kor said.

He also said that Collectible Coffee draws inspiration from the art community and the numbers on the bag are like artist numbering their proofs.

"Collectible Coffee is a brand for artists, by artists, dedicated to giving a platform for those seeking a voice that is uniquely theirs, a voice with individual meaning and collective impact," according to the shop’s website.

The bags of coffee are created in small, 500-batch releases and feature the production number on the bags, according to the same website.

The numbering system will let customers know how rare their bag is, Kor said. "My dream was to open a coffee shop, but maybe have a piece of art that has a little bit of cool artwork, " Kor said.

Dry processing means the coffee beans are dried while still a cherry, which is what gives them a sweet nutty flavor, according to Espresso and Coffee Guide.

"Collectible Coffee’s website. "I feel like artists … are underpaid and undervalued for what they do because they offer a lot to society as a whole," Gelovani said. "And so we want to be able to bring them real opportunities." In addition to coffee bags, Collectible Coffee also sells shirts, mugs, hoodies and mugs on their website.

"So like, you know, if it’s like a dark roast, sometimes called Bourbon Coffee. "I really want to give back to the school and to the local art community as well," Kor said.

"I feel like artists are underpaid and undervalued for what they do because they offer a lot to society as a whole," Gelovani said. "And so we want to be able to bring them real opportunities."
Traveling is the best education

Living in another country can expand your horizons, expose your cultural biases more than tourism can. Residents wouldn’t even think about it.

They just think, “That is how life is and that’s it.” Those traveling outside of their country for long periods of time may realize that their own cultural habits are not universal. I’m not talking about traveling for a few days or weeks, because in this case you keep your way of life and thinking in your bags. You just moving them with you and keeping an outsider’s vision of your environment, which pushes you to admire anything new as long as it’s different from your home. You put your criticism to the side and work on your touristic experience to make it fun anyway.

This is not the type of travel I’m talking about. I’m talking about settling down for months, opening your bags and deconstructing the way you were raised to think. By trying to fit in with unfamiliar surroundings, you’re forced to confront what you’re used to in your home country, from the food you eat to your relationships. I’ve always thought rampant cigarette smoking was an inaccurate French stereotype, until I noticed how I rarely see young Americans smoking them. It made me realize how smoking was trivialized in my home country, and how young people start there.

I’ve always thought university professors were people you had to keep an important hierarchical distance with until I started studying at San Jose State and saw how the relationships between students and professors could be more collaborative. I also quickly learned in my experience abroad that humor also changes with each country. Sarcasm and irony are pretty usual where I’m from, and I’ve felt that being sarcastic could lead a lot of funny misunderstandings in the U.S. I believed every word or idea could be translated from my language to English, and then realized some French words didn’t have an “English twin.” For example, in a study published in 2014, Jianjun Wang and Sunihan Sunihan from Hokkoh, the capital of Inner Mongolia, in the north of China analyzed the untranslatable ability between English and Chinese from an intercultural perspective. They said in the introduction of their research that “Language is of course translatable to some extent, while we should not neglect the basic fact that there are still a lot of phenomena showing that untranslatability can be seen and exist in intercultural communication.”

Canadian anthropologist Kalervo Oberg theorized the idea of “culture shock” in 1954, as a feeling of uncertainty and anxiety that affects people immersed in cultures unfamiliar to them, according to the Longwood University website. Oberg said culture adjustment can be frustrating when individuals focus on the negative aspects of cultural shock, differences according to the same website.

Culture shock can easily lead people to rank what they are familiar with as something more “normal” than what they discover in another area, putting one custom “above” another. Because we consider what we’re used to as our norm, culture shocks may cause people to have a judgmental approach to cultural differences and reject them, perceiving different habits as “weird” or “too strange.”

I came to San Jose from France on August 13, 2021, and I’ve learned more about my country by leaving for one year than I would’ve by staying inside.
Manfred almost ruins baseball again

By Gio Gaxiola

SPORTS EDITOR

On March 1, Major League Baseball (MLB) commissioner Rob Manfred announced that MLB would delay the 2022 season. Manfred is the worst commissioner, not only in MLB history, but possibly the worst commissioner of any sports organization of all time.

When the Atlanta Braves won the 2021 World Series against the Houston Astros, fans were filled with excitement for the upcoming season. Many talks between the two groups reached a salary agreement March 10 to end negotiations for the players, according to a March 21, 2019, New York Times article.

The greed and incompetence of Manfred has led to the terrible state of MLB. Bud Selig must be shaking his fist in his grave from Manfred's antics.

The collective bargaining agreement is a legal contract between MLB and the players. MLB and MLBPA came to an agreement March 10 to end the 99-day lockout after the two groups reached a salary negotiation for the players, according to a March 21, 2019 NBC Sports article.

Many talks between the two sides carried on into the winter months with neither side backing down. The main problem for many of the failed negotiations and the lockout came from Manfred. This is the latest mismanagement from Manfred's inferior run as MLB commissioner.

Manfred said in a March 1 news release that the two groups "failed to achieve [their] mutual goal of a fair deal." To Our Fans: I had hoped against hope that I would not have to write this article, but the cheating allegations were later proven thanks to ex-Astros starting pitcher Mike Fiers coming forward. The Houston Astros had been stealing signs - observing, decoding, and relaying hand signals from the L.A. Dodgers' catcher to their pitcher when batteries for the Astros approached the plate, according to a Nov. 2, 2021, New York Times article.

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The greed and incompetence of Manfred has led to the terrible state of MLB. Bud Selig must be shaking his fist in his grave from Manfred’s antics. The sooner MLB gets rid of the inferior commissioner that is Manfred, the sooner the league will see its popularity boost. The league is a better sport without Manfred at the helm.

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