

Racism, War & Nuclear Weapons

Racism is ingrained in the history and conduct of our country's many wars and the development and use of nuclear weapons.

From 1776 to today, people of color have fought in all of our country's many wars, including the genocides against Native Americans. Until recently, they were frequently denied the basic rights of citizenship while enduring discrimination, racial hatred and violence.

“National and international security priorities have been dominated by white Western elite, at the expense of peoples of color around the world. While indigenous people and peoples of color have borne the brunt of Western militarism, their contributions to international peace and security are too often overlooked”

International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

“What will be the ultimate value of having established social justice in a context where all people, Negro and White, are merely free to face destruction by...atomic war?” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“All of our hopes for equality, for justice, economic security, for a healthy environment, depend on nuclear disarmament.” Coretta Scott King

Racism in nuclear weapons history and doctrine: Racism guides who is permitted to develop nuclear weapons. White nations (U.S., U.K, France, Israel) are “responsible nuclear powers” but other countries of color and former colonies (China, N. Korea, Pakistan, India, Iran) are not to be trusted with nuclear weapons. Japan was bombed with nuclear weapons. Germany was not. Japan and China were long considered the “yellow peril” and the target of racism and discrimination.

Nuclear weapons development harmed Indigenous people and people of color: Worldwide nuclear testing used Indigenous lands in the U.S., Kazakhstan, Australia, Africa and the South Pacific. Uranium mining (like all mining) impacts poor communities, Indigenous people and people of color disproportionately.

Minorities are disproportionately harmed by the cost of nukes and war: Money wasted excessive military spending is not available for important social needs.

“A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual doom.” Dr. King

Minorities pay a higher price in war: In Vietnam, minorities were drafted, served in combat and were killed or wounded in high numbers than their proportion of the population.

“...racial hatred and the atom bomb both threaten the destruction of man...[in] the fight for civil rights and struggle for world peace...both fights are the same.” James Baldwin

Many people of color have spoken against war and nuclear weapons. We all should be inspired to work for peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons. ***Ironically the failure to do so may be the most egalitarian act in human history – the extinction of *Homo sapiens* as a species.***

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