Warmly, Vijay.

A Gestapo officer barged into Picasso's apartment in Paris. There was a photograph of Pablo Picasso, the artist, was so moved by news of the fascist bombing raid on this town that he painted his most powerful work – Guernica (1937) – which now hangs in Madrid's Reina Sofia.

We had in mind the terrible bombardment of Iraqi society and civilisation. We had in mind Chelsea Manning, sitting in a prison cell, for providing us with The Iraq War Logs that would help us, in the near future, to hold those responsible for launching the war of aggression on Iraq as war criminals. For exposing the human rights violations, criminality and horrors of US war on Iraq.

Thank You, Julian Assange. Thank You, Chelsea Manning,

A few days ago, I joined a group of Iraqis (such as the writer Haifa Zangana and Thuraiya Muhammed of the Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research) in a demonstration on the White House lawn to call the attention of the United States government to the gross human rights abuses of the Iraqi state.

There is always the illusion that military spending is for security, when it appears to be more for profit. The entire arms industry is 'hard-wired for corruption'.

Why do governments spend such a vulgar amount on weapons? In his monumental Grundrisse (1857), Karl Marx wrote, that 'arms trade corruption then accounted for 40-45% of the total corruption in world trade'. The national security state has been, in the modern era, corrupting institutions and the entire system.

Global military spending is over $2 trillion, with the United States by itself spending almost half this amount. Total US military spending is over $800 billion, with an additional $300 billion being spent on 'security' by our friend's at the CIA, the FBI, the NSA, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Central Intelligence Agency. Add these up and the US military budget is already over $1 trillion, as our friends at SIPRI have noted in 2008. Last year, the UN began a campaign to raise $10 billion to eradicate illiteracy. But even these meagre funds have been impossible to raise, the partnerships falling flat. There is always money for war, but never enough money to build the scaffolding for peace.

Focus on the arms industry is sporadic, with the aims of such formidable military spending. A world awash with weapons leads to tragedies, such as the recent massacre in Sri Lanka, where military-grade explosives were used in the terrible murder of over three hundred and fifty innocent people.

Global arms transfers are a growing market of over $350 billion. The list of leading arms companies is top-secret. The Arms Trade Treaty (2013), the first global treaty to regulate the international trade in conventional arms, was signed by 142 states and came into force in December 2014. The treaty came into force after 58 states ratified, meaning that it has not even achieved its minimum requirement of 50 states.

There are 293 articles on the web page on 'arms transfers'. Take a look. It's quite a furnace of arms deals. There is a world awash with weapons. It is a world of the arms lobby and the global arms companies.

Last year, the United States spent more on its military than the next nine highest-spending countries combined: Russia, India, France, United Kingdom, Japan, Germany and South Korea. 'Security' or 'deterrence' are not the main security, strategic or political aims of such formidable military spending. The talks between President Trump and North Korea's Kim Jong-un were to discuss the trade-off between the US's withdrawal from the nuclear arms treaty with Russia and North Korea's nuclear programme.

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