

Courage My Friends Podcast Series X – Episode 4 Mining, Militarism and Organizing Against the March to War

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ANNOUNCER: You're listening to *Needs No Introduction*.

Needs No Introduction is a rabble podcast network show that serves up a series of speeches, interviews and lectures from the finest minds of our time

RESH: Why this drastic increase in defense spending by the Carney government? What does this turn toward militarism mean for Canada including in its role as the mining capital of the world? How is mining connected to militarism and what does it mean to communities here and really everywhere? Are we really a global peace-keeper or another architect of a war-filled future? And how are people organizing against the twin dangers of arms and extractivism?

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COURAGE MY FRIENDS ANNOUNCER: Welcome back to this podcast series by rabble.ca and the Tommy Douglas Institute at George Brown College.

In the words of the great Tommy Douglas...

TOMMY (Actor): Courage my friends, 'tis not too late to build a better world

COURAGE MY FRIENDS ANNOUNCER: This is the Courage My Friends Podcast.

RESH: Welcome to Episode Four, Mining, Militarism and Organizing Against the March to War

I'm your host Resh Budhu.

In our fourth episode of the season, we are pleased to welcome organizer with the Mining Injustice Solidarity Network, Kara Anderson and welcome back Canada organizer for World Beyond War and coordinator of the Arms Embargo Now Campaign, Rachel Small. We discuss Canada's radical turn toward militarism and its ramping up of defence spending, the many and deep connections between militarism and mining in the mining capital of the world and solidarity organizing against this march to war.

Kara, welcome and Rachel, welcome back. Kara, tell us about the Mining Injustice Solidarity Network.

KARA: The Mining and Justice Solidarity Network, also known as MISN, is a grassroots collective organizing here in Toronto, which we consider to be the belly of the beast or the global capital for mining.

Because many of the mining companies are headquartered here, Vancouver, and they often trade on the Toronto Stock Exchange. And so our focus is on supporting

communities on the frontline. Respecting their right to say no. And respecting their sovereignty.

RESH: Thank you. And Rachel, welcome back again and tell us about World Beyond War.

RACHEL: Yeah, thanks for having me. Great to be here. So World Beyond War is a global network and grassroots movement to abolish war, shut down the military industrial complex and build alternatives together.

So here across so-called Canada, I work to end the violence of Canadian militarism, really in solidarity. I think the common theme of this interview might be about solidarity, but yeah, really in solidarity with everyone who's kind of facing down the barrel of the violence of Canadian militarism and really it's growing partnership with the US war machine. So we work in solidarity, I mean, right this month in folks from Iran to Sudan, to Palestine, to the Congo, to Venezuela and Cuba.

And really trying to look at where is Canadian militarism causing harm and what can we do to end that?

RESH: Thank you. And there's a lot of work for you to do right now, and we're gonna get into that. So, Canada's global brand has largely revolved around its reputation as a peacekeeping, middle power and defender of human rights. And in some ways this is merited, but this is also quite rightly challenged.

Kara, give us some more background on Canada's role in global mining.

KARA: Yeah, I think it's important to understand that with Canada being the kind of global headquarter for mining, mining is necessary for conflict.

So a lot of times Canada's role is kind of eclipsed from the conversation. And I think it's really important to recognize this right now.

Recently attending like a federal event at the PDAC, which is the largest mining convention in the world, they were talking about how they're really trying to reform their former status as like a mining superpower.

And this is all coming alongside where we're seeing like an insane increase in defence budgets, oftentimes using the language of critical minerals to kind of hide the fact that a lot of this will be used for defence and not necessarily for everyday consumption.

And so I think too, when we think of like militarism, we also need to think about like mining, militarism supply chains and how oftentimes, even if Canada isn't the one initiating conflict, they're a huge part as to like why these conflicts can move forward, with their ongoing ability to supply critical minerals. And specifically with the US right now.

So there's the Canada US Joint plan on critical minerals, and it's to address mineral security concerns. And it's basically to ensure that both countries have consistent access to critical minerals.

KARA: Also too, there's a new, in a newer initiative, I should say, with G7 countries to boost critical mineral access for select foreign partners in the name of collective defence.

RESH: Right. And this is coming along a backdrop of years of really problematic mining behaviors that are connected to Canada. Really human rights violations that have been happening globally. So could you just go a bit more into how big a mining footprint Canada has globally, particularly I think in Latin America and Africa.

KARA: Yeah, so I think it's important to start with the fact that most of the juniors in the world, junior mining companies in the world are Canadian. That's where they get funding.

And so junior mining companies are the people who basically prepare land for the creation of a mine. And then later on larger mining companies, which are known as senior mining companies like Rio Tinto, will come in and buy this land.

And so there's a lot of violence that goes into preparing a mine site. First and foremost kind of selecting an area which oftentimes they don't have access to.

In countries like Canada, it's actually really easy to just simply go online and get a permit, and go in places like Quebec and start sampling without any consultation. Same thing in Ontario.

And then oftentimes, once they kind of identify a mineral deposit, they'll start bringing in construction equipment and they want that construction equipment protected. So they'll bring in like militarized security forces to start protecting that.

And then when communities start figuring out what's going on and dissenting, they often use violence to shut them up.

So in Guatemala, and particularly with the Escobal mine, which is currently owned by Pan-American Silver, the Xinka community has been in resistance for several years. And they've used different tactics like, you know, threatening frontline defenders. Some of them have had to leave their communities for safety reasons.

KARA: So that's kind of like some of the violence you had before mine actually happens. And then once there's equipment there, things ramp up because mining companies need to protect the profit. So they oftentimes collude with local police forces and bring in militarized police forces.

In places like Guatemala, we see kind of ex-military officials who were involved in the State-led genocide are often now heads of security for these mining companies.

So we have violence at different stages as well. And again, the idea is to kind of protect profit as much as possible.

RESH: Okay. Thank you for that. Now, under the Carney government, we're seeing, as Kara was just saying, a massive increase in defence spending. And he just announced a further \$35 billion for Arctic defence. Rachel, what does this pivot to militarism look like and what does it mean? Is this new or just an acceleration of something that was already happening?

RACHEL: Yeah, that's a great question. Maybe just to bridge it by kind of jumping on the last one. I think it's important to note that Canada is a country that's built on the removal of Indigenous people from their land for resource extraction.

That's the foundational war of Canada. That's how this country was created. And that's also what Canada's global relations overwhelmingly look like. So when we're talking about Canadian mining companies around the world, like it's that continuation of that same pattern of colonization.

And as Kara said, that violence can play out in, in many, many different ways. You can remove people from their land by poisoning the land and the water, through economic coercion, through literally the assassination of anyone who stands up to a Canadian mining project, through supporting the militarization of a region.

Canada is very rarely sending in Canadian troops to securitize a mine, but is much more frequently supporting really violent and oppressive regimes to do that dirty work for a Canadian mining company.

And then the cycle sort of continues. All this violence is required in order to evict people from their land so that there can be a mine. And then increasingly, as Kara said, what is being mined is like literally the ingredients of the most horrific weapons on the planet.

I think we've all been watching over the past couple years as F-35, the most advanced warplane in the world have just decimated Gaza, like the most advanced war planes are being used to burn people alive in their tents. People who have no means of defending. It's a very dystopian scene.

Every single one of those F-35s has over 900 pounds of these rare earth minerals, that are very reliant on Canadian mining. So we're using violence to make these mines. And then these mines are required for the war machine. And then what's mined is being used to enact violence on other people all over the world. Like it's a really horrific cycle.

I mean not to mention that like a quarter of all the greenhouse gas emissions around the world are literally from mining. There's so many ways in which the Canadian mining industry is just truly at the heart of the most destructive forces on the planet and is like literally making an unlivable planet for everybody from a climate

perspective, from a war and violence perspective. From a theft of Indigenous land perspective, et cetera.

So at this point, you like, you really can't separate Canadian mining from the military industrial complex. And I'm really glad that we're having this conversation for that reason. 'cause I think it's really poorly understood that connection.

That said, as you mentioned, Carney government has become ever more clear about these connections. And I mean, if you took a look at the 2025 budget for this country, militarism is embedded in every part of it and they're no longer pretending

RESH: It's called Canada Strong, right?

Yes. So it really sort of exemplifies this military turn. Yeah.

RACHEL: And there's all types of strength. And there could be strength through like investing in what our communities need to be strong. In health and education, in really ambitious nation-building projects that are not about like strength through violence and militarism. But unfortunately that is not the path that he has chosen.

And they're not even pretending anymore that critical mineral mining is for like electric vehicles or whatever. I mean, there's various things that it could be used for, but they're become just brazenly clear. Like no, this is about supplying the biggest defence companies on the earth who like rely on these minerals to make these dystopian weapons.

So yeah, I mean what we're looking at now is, Carney really pushing an agenda for Canada that's about economic prosperity and foreign policy and a domestic policy built on militarism and war. And this is actually like a pretty radically new path for Canada.

And overwhelmingly what that whole path is relying on is on moving Canada closer and closer to the US militarily.

So on one hand, despite talking in the election campaign and his Davos speech, et cetera, about, I don't know, "elbows up", about separating from the US, about standing up to resisting these big bullies. What he's actually done is move Canada horrifyingly, like at breakneck speed, down a path that really is based on ever-increasing militarization and warmongering in lockstep with the US.

And I think if this wasn't like clear enough before, the past few weeks have really just laid it completely bare with the Canadian government's full throated support for Israel and the US is just like horrific and wildly illegal bombings of Iran. Starting now a new regional war. And the government refused in any way to separate itself from this kind of new edge of US war-making.

And of course we've seen this too in their refusal to act in the face of US' invasion of Venezuela, ongoing campaign of starving Cuba.

Like there's talk on one hand of, oh, we're doing our own thing and then zero interest in actually doing that.

I mean, there's been new kind of defence announcements coming out every couple weeks or more often, sometimes. And just a few weeks ago, it was this new Defence Industrial Strategy was released, literally throwing around half a trillion dollars to ramp up military production and arms exports in the country. To weaken already dysfunctional permitting processes. And like I said, really banking Canada's future on economic prosperity through militarism and war profiteering, including ramping up arms exports 50%, et cetera.

And I should say, these numbers are like complete fiction. Like they're made up. They're fantasy. You can't say, oh, we're gonna ramp up our arms exports by 50%. No matter how many billions of dollars you're throwing on it, you have no way of knowing that other countries are gonna buy the increased production, especially at this global moment of a ramped up arms race where all these countries are also investing in their own domestic production.

So even from a financial economic perspective, it's a fantasy and it's really hard to believe these numbers that are gonna play out, but it's also just completely morally bankrupt strategy and approach.

RESH: So just, I I just wanna go back a bit because Prime Minister Carney has been making waves at home and globally. So you mentioned his January 20th speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos went viral 'cause he called for finally middle powers to unite in a shift away from the old rules-based international order and domination of hard power, AKA, the United States.

But then as you said, we've seen, his implicit support for US aggressions against Venezuela and Iran, though he did backtrack on the latter. So a question for you both, and we've been talking about this, but really to put it down, who is Carney and who is this new Liberal government?

So Kara, who is this government?

KARA: I would describe this government as like they say one thing and do the opposite. I think it's really interesting what you're saying about like how Canada is in lockstep what Rachel is saying.

But even a few weeks ago at the P-DAC conference, they had this whole Invest Canada thing and the Minister of Energy was there, Tim Hodgkins. And his whole schtick was that we are not the US this is why you should be investing with us. We will never use our mineral supply to like blackmail other countries. Like we're the good guys.

And so I think it's like really important to understand that they're continuing to frame themselves as distinct from the US and trying to really create that separation. But at the end of the day, their actions speak otherwise. So it's really hard to, I think, trust anything that they do say, especially when their actions just say it's quite the opposite.

RESH: Right. And so again, in terms of this Canada Strong - Budget 2025, it's very interesting the way in which military investment is being used. Yeah, it's about defence and protecting our sovereignty, but it's also economic stimulus and a great job creation plan.

And some are describing this as sort of a military Keynesianism.

RACHEL: I mean, there's a way in which Carney was kind of an unknown entity. Like obviously somebody who was, you know, in the public space and quite visible on the global stage. But as a banker. And I mean, he is clearly still a banker. But he's been in power now a year, so I think we can at this point feel like we have some evidence of what him and this government is all about.

I mean, to me he's kind of like a wolf in sheep's clothing. He presents and talks as Kara said, in a particular kind of way. But his policies, his actions, the laws that he's trying to pass, like it's very Trumpian. Like it's really moving us down a very, very similar path as the US in terms of the redistribution of public funds, just straight up towards militarism and towards the same US war companies.

RESH: And also the immigration policies that we were talking about when you were here earlier, right? C-2 and C-12. Yeah.

RACHEL: Exactly. Yeah. And in terms of cutting back the public sector. Like robbing the country of what is actually needed to address the actual security threats that face people in this country.

RESH: Say more about that. Because you're talking about the social cost of this military buildup.

RACHEL: Yeah. I mean, if you're looking at what is actually like killing people in Canada now and, and certainly project increase in the future, like things like climate change and ecological collapse, certainly disease epidemics, public health emergencies. But also really just like poverty coupled with the ballooning costs of housing and food. A lack of access to health.

Like this is what are the security threats for many millions of people across Canada right now. And when we're spending hundreds of billions of dollars, increasingly on like these outrageous, aggressive and like wildly overpriced weapon systems like the Golden Dome for example, which is a pure fantasy in Trump's mind.

I think it's a slap in the face to everyone in Canada who's currently struggling to get by, who can't even imagine a life for their children in a country, frankly, that sets new wildfire records nearly every year. Like this is more and more money being pulled away from the immediate survival needs of people.

And we're not even talking about like visionary future planning. Like we are in climate collapse and crisis right now. And to be pulling even just the small amount of funds that was devoted to that away to invest it in war. It's brutal. And I think that these decisions unfortunately, are like super long-term.

Like just like when you build a pipeline, you're entrenching a future of oil extraction and climate crisis, right? Like you're not just building a pipeline just in case. That's you kind of committing to what the future of the country is gonna look like from an oil perspective.

So similarly, when Carney is deciding that we're gonna ramp up Canada's military budget, we're gonna escalate a global arms race, we're gonna purchase all these new warships fighter jets, space missiles, which is what the Golden Dome is, that's a commitment to wage war via these weapon systems for decades to come.

That means that Canada's foreign policy strategy is going to be based on fighter jets and warships and dropping bombs, versus any ideas about diplomacy or peace building.

They do not buy these tools and then not use them. They're not "just in case" tools. This is a decision, oh, this is how we're gonna engage in the world.

RACHEL: That's really scary that they're making a promise really, of a war-filled future.

RESH: Absolutely. And when Carney is talking about this, I mean, he's talking about our defence spending, it's going up, we're going to be protecting our borders, all of that. He's also been promoting Canada as a resource powerhouse. You know, we've gotta diversify our trading partners, Hey everybody, come to Canada, we have all of these resources. Which is true, we are a very resource-rich Canada. Kara, how are you hearing this when we are being promoted this way?

KARA: Yeah, So I think a quote from the Energy Ministry, Minister is actually really telling. He told investors that it would be a shame not to take advantage of the current crisis and a shame not to invest at this Investment Canada thing.

Essentially it was built on this whole idea that Canada has this infinite capacity to develop resources. They just needed some government spending to do that. And now that they're receiving all this cash that they are ready to go.

I think the other thing to recognize too is that it's not just kind of like exploring but Canada wants to ramp up their ability to produce, kind of process the minerals. They

wanna build more midstream and downstream processing for mining. So it's not just exploration at this point. Because again, if you build midstream and downstream, that is where like the high value adding steps are, and right now those are being exported to other countries.

And this way too, Canada's kind of trying to like close their own production cycle, and being able to essentially create these like high value minerals and then being able to use them as they please. So I think internally too, we are seeing kind of like a bolstering of their own infrastructure and their ability to follow through on some of this stuff.

RESH: Right. And as was brought up earlier, there is a severe ecological price to be paid for that. But we rarely talk about the climate and ecological impacts of militarism and of mining abroad. Since we only track mining emissions within borders and military emissions, we don't track at all.

So back to you, Kara. Talk about the climate price of all of this and can we even know the full extent of it?

KARA: No, there's no way to know unfortunately at this point.

So we have things like when you contaminate a waterway, right? So there are more immediate effects, like what that does to the environment, what that does to local ecosystems, what that does to humans. Maybe you'll see like an increase in urinary tract infections. But unfortunately too, a lot of the long-term effects of this stuff are only now just starting to be understood. And also too, right? Like you're not just taking away people's ability to live right now, you're taking away their ability to live in the future.

If they don't have access to water, then they can't participate in agriculture. If they lose access to certain lakes or ports right, then they can't go fishing.

And so thinking about this everyday cost of how these climate issues kind of trickle in to all these areas of everyday life.

KARA: And then I think the other thing too, like when you have giant open pit mines in the ground, you can't heal from that. Like there is no restoration that can be done, at least within the current infrastructure. And so communities, they either have to leave or they have to kind of figure out ways to build life within these dystopian places that are very much like sacrifice zones.

And again, a lot of their governments have no interest in actually supporting restoration and these foreign companies, specifically Canadian mining companies are not held to any standards in terms of having to clean up their mines.

The other thing to understand is that mining prices and the prices of ores kind of fluctuate. So sometimes mines will stop for a bit and then they'll restart and then they'll stop, and then maybe they'll have like an expansion or maybe they won't.

When they kind of stop randomly and they think maybe they're gonna come back and then they don't end up coming back, there's kind of no way to hold them accountable for that either. So the closing of mines is also kind of problematic in that regard.

RESH: Who are some of the major mining companies?

KARA: So we have Barrick Gold, we have Rio Tinto, we have Red Giant Copper, Valet. There's so many.

RACHEL: Yeah, I think what Kara said here is really important. The overlap between the disasters and progress of like militarism and climate crisis is enormous. And the climate crisis is in large part, both caused by and being used as an excuse for increasing warmaking and militarism.

RESH: How is it being used as an excuse for, just to clarify that.

RACHEL: So the presumed threat of borders being flooded by climate refugees is being used as an excuse to ramp up border security like militarization of borders.

A report that was released probably over a year ago now, but the numbers really stuck with me. And again, these numbers were true before the radical ramp of militarism, so they're much more striking now, I'm sure. But it showed that Canada spends 15 times more on the militarization of its borders than on the climate financing that's actually intended to mitigate climate change and the forced displacement of people.

So, in other words, Canada, one of the countries most responsible for the climate crisis spends vastly, vastly more on arming its borders to keep migrants out than on in any way tackling the crisis that's forcing these people to flee from their homes in the first place. Right?

And if you're looking at borders, who can cross these borders? But weapons, of course, cross borders effortlessly and secretly, while humans are prevented from doing so.

War and militarism is just a huge cause of climate change, but also from a perspective of colonization. It's Indigenous resistance, that is the most significant force in the planet in terms of stopping climate change. It's been shown that at least 25% of annual emissions in Canada and the US have been prevented by Indigenous people resisting pipelines and other fossil fuel projects.

RESH: Well, they're on the front lines of this.

RACHEL: Exactly

RESH: Yeah.

RACHEL: And I've read that Indigenous folks who make up just 5% of the world's population protect 80% of the Earth's biodiversity. So anything that these Canadian mining projects do to steal Indigenous land, to continue that colonization process is not only sort of a local impact, but just contributing to this global picture of creating kind of an unlivable planet for everyone.

And obviously we should stand with Indigenous people for a whole bunch of reasons, but even just the selfish reason of running a planet that we can survive on in the future, is a very strong reason to not remove Indigenous people from their land.

RESH: Right. Marco Rubio, who is the Secretary of State, had given a remarkable speech at the Munich Security Conference not too long ago. Where he really sort of openly called for recolonization where he celebrated those colonial years and said that, you know, the world took a turn, the western world was ascendant, and then it faced the twin evils of communism and decolonization.

KARA: This just makes me think of something we've been talking a lot about at MISN, which is like the playbook for mining is not new. The playbook for mining is the ways in which colonization itself has perpetuated itself.

Again, what is the premise for going into other countries? It's to get resources. And how do you do that? You do that through violence. Like the OG colonial ways. But I think that kind of just reinforces why it's so important to shut things down, like mining, like while mining is so central to a lot of the violence, the militarization that we see in the world today.

Because on the one hand it does create weapons of war. It has very real material impacts. But also too, it kind of creates this ongoing justification as to why we constantly need military force. And so that's why we say it's a cycle, right?

You go in, you use violence to take the land, to kind of get your way with whatever you need, and then you use that to make weapons. And then these weapons, again, end up in opposite parts of the world, blowing things up. But then these weapons also end up back in the same communities from which they were mined and they're used to kind of further suppress these communities. So it is this really vicious cycle that starts very much with this like colonial mentality.

So again, like shutting that down to its core is just why it's so important to like shut mining processes down. It's not the only solution, but it is a huge component of this kind of process.

RESH: So in terms of the messaging, increased militarism and resource extraction is being framed within, again, that spirit of "elbows up", right? So defending Canadian sovereignty, protecting national security, growing the economy. And this has gained a lot of traction across the country. So, Rachel could you speak to this messaging, because people seem to be very on board with this.

RACHEL: Yeah, I mean, I think that there is a really strong implication right now that this, like historic military spending is what's needed to protect us from the US. And just to like put that in context.

So Canadian military spending had already doubled from \$20 billion to over \$40 billion over the past decade. That's huge to have it double. And then last June, Carney gave it an extra \$9 billion overnight and then committed to doubling it again over the next decade. So what we're talking about, the number that's kind of being floated around is that the new defence spending would amount to \$150 billion per year in the next decade. That's per year. Which is just an astronomical figure.

And with these numbers, it's like hard to even know what we're talking about, like what is \$150 billion? But to crunch it down, that's nearly 10 times Toronto's entire city budget. So for the biggest city in the country. It's vastly more than the federal government spends on all health and social transfers to all the provinces and territories combined. Like it's an enormous flow of funding that's pretty unprecedented in Canada since at least World War II. It can be hard to compare numbers 70 years apart.

So the implication is, oh, maybe this isn't what we would've chosen to spend our money on, but this is needed to defend us from Trump.

But unfortunately, it really is the opposite. This is an enormous gift to Trump. It's Canada literally doing precisely what Trump demanded Canada do, right. The reason that ramping up Canadian militarism is giving Trump what he wants is also the same reason that it's just totally ridiculous from like a defence from the US perspective.

And that's that the Canadian and US militaries are so deeply intertwined. And that has already been the case. That's not a new thing. But this historic investment in militarism is further deepening that.

So, I mean, maybe it's helpful to look at some examples of what the money is actually for.

I mentioned the Golden Dome earlier, which I don't think has gotten enough attention despite the fact that, yeah, over the past year, Carney has been quietly taking steps towards signing Canada onto this project. So it's basically like a dangerous delusion that Trump has of a missile shield over the US and presumably over Canada too if we join in.

But it's a plan that's based on completely non-existent technology, to put missiles in space for the first time on planet Earth. The implication I guess is oh, this is a defensive thing. But if you even read the first few sentences of Trump's original executive order on it, it like specifically named that this would have capacity to defeat missile attacks prior to launch, which means attacking first before someone is attacking you. So it's an explicitly like offensive weapon system.

And I mean, if you think of anyone in the world who's concerned about aggression from the US, and the US has of course invaded or attacked far more countries than any other country has, they will see this as a direct threat and a direct provocation, right?

And they'll feel pressure to ramp up their own capacity to launch weapons into space. Like it's, to me, a very, very scary path to accelerate global arms race to militarize space. 'cause it's not enough that we're fighting wars on the land and at sea, like clearly we need space wars as well. And it's a huge transfer of capital to tech oligarchs like Elon Musk. Not to mention of course the weapons companies like Lockheed Martin.

And just also from a even pure just Canadian safety perspective, there's no way I can imagine that Canada joining a missiles in space program will make us more safe. I think it's infinitely more likely to make Canada a target and to make Canada join kind of US' camp in the world as just a war-mongering kind of aggressor.

RESH: Well, it's interesting that

RACHEL: That's just one example.

RESH: Well, you know, you brought up Lockheed Martin. The majority of these weapons companies are US weapons companies. So there's a contradiction or hypocrisy there that, it was elbows up again against the US, it's threats of annexation, but at the same time, we're deepening military integration with the US and this money is going into US companies, through everything including through our pensions, which I was talking about a couple episodes ago.

Is it also going to the paramilitary, like ICE, that we're also producing vehicles for ICE.

RACHEL: Yeah, I think in both the mining industries and in military industries, like following the money and following the materials and the weapons is a really sound strategy for figuring out what's actually happening.

You mentioned Lockheed Martin. Another example that I think is worth looking at is Canada's ongoing purchase of F-35s which we've mentioned before.

Canada's been part of the F-35 program for many years, which means that there are at least a hundred suppliers in Canada who make parts of the F-35 fighter jet. And

these are of course made by Lockheed Martin in the US in a Texas factory. So we have already for many years been deeply intertwined in this and ingrained in this supply system, which is hugely relevant in many ways.

But for example, as we've all witnessed, just the devastating use of F-35s in these thousands of hours of flights and bombing missions over Gaza, we rightly have pointed out that there are millions of dollars in Canadian components in every single one of these jets. So Canada can't say, oh, we're not arming Israel if you're providing the parts and an ongoing flow of replacement parts for the Israeli F-35.

So we're part of the supply chain of this. And now we're also talking about buying them despite the fact, as you pointed out, like this is an American weapon system through and through. Canada literally cannot fly these jets except in collaboration with the US. There's no possible way that we would be using them to defend ourselves from the US.

We've all seen the horrific devastation that they're designed to cause. And even despite all of this rhetoric of standing up to the US even despite the Carney government kind of being forced to launch a kind of inquiry into a review of are we really gonna buy these F-35s ? They're gonna buy these F-35s. It's money directly to Lockheed Martin. It's hard to believe that this kind of posturing, that this defence spending, is gonna separate from the US is gonna be able to survive. It's hard to say anything else other than just the sheer hypocrisy of it.

And of course, these jets were also used in the recent bombing of Venezuela, in the ongoing attacks on Iran. The F-35 is just one example of how Canadian weapons factories are supplying the US war machine.

And as you alluded to, just a month ago, I was actually at a birthday party with my kids. And I get a call from a fellow member of the Arms Embargo Now organizing team saying, I'm sending you a link. Watch this live stream right now. It's literally live from the streets of Minneapolis. And the Canadian Roshel armored vehicles, you can literally see them in the frame.

So I go on my phone and I'm watching. And I didn't realize that at this time, but this turned out to be the same hour, like from the same scene where Alex Priti was killed. Someone who was trying to film what ICE was doing. Yeah, literally, right there are Roshel armored vehicles. So these are armored vehicles from a company that's headquartered and based and their big factory is in Brampton, right near Toronto. It's unclear exactly which chunk of the vehicles were made at Roshel's brand new US factory versus this, but like the Brampton factory is a hundred percent involved.

Honestly, 2026 has been a terrible year. And just in these first, what are we, two and a half months in, we have witnessed not just horrific violence around the world, but like specifically been able to identify Canadian weapons on the scene of all these horrific war crimes.

So Project Plowshares did a great report identifying Canadian-made sensors made by the L3 Harris factory in Hamilton, Ontario, being used in the US's bombing missions of all these Venezuelan fishing boats, for instance.

We saw these Roshel videos on the streets of Minneapolis.

We continue to be able to trace the flow of Canadian weapons to Israel's ongoing bombardment of Gaza.

There has been ongoing evidence of the way Canadian weapons have ended up being used in horrific violence in Sudan.

We're continuing to follow the way that Canadian mining companies are causing just enormous violence in the Congo.

Like all of this has been at the same time that many of us have been working very, very hard to change Canadian laws around arms exports.

RESH: I wanna pull Kara into this because there's also a framing of those who speak against military buildup and the extraction economy as standing opposed to Canadian defence and development and sovereignty, which is especially ironic again when it comes to Indigenous peoples standing on the front lines of this.

So Kara, could you speak to this framing again in terms of defence and also what is happening to Indigenous peoples in terms of their free, prior and informed consent.

KARA: Yeah, so we have like the ramping up of like Bills 5 here in Ontario, for example, that is just trying to fast track major infrastructure projects. And it seems like with all the federal messaging too. And also the fact that they're changing agreements with provinces, so they don't need federal and provincial permits, they can just get one permit which will fast track any sort of development in these areas.

But it seems like things are about to get extremely violent. And if we think back to the invasion of Wet'suwet'en land and how they use these militarized police forces and these armored vehicles. You know, they take directly from like military playbooks to quite literally invade Indigenous land here in Canada.

So it's interesting that they have this narrative where they're trying to prevent militarization and invasion and violence from other countries, but they're not afraid to use that violence on people in so-called Canada here, who they see as a threat.

So I think like in the next couple months too, it's going to be really important to pay attention to what is happening on Indigenous land. We know that like the Kinross mine in Ontario was just fast tracked. We know that the Ring of Fire is about to be a huge point of contention where people are already starting to have blockades. They're most likely going to become very violent very soon.

And so I think, again, understanding that this violence isn't just like the threat we face abroad, but it's something that our own state is very capable of and they often use the threat of foreign violence to justify violence here on the ground.

RESH: Right. And as you were saying, you're sort of seeing these messaging that just happened again at the P-DAC conference, the annual mining convention for the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada. Speak a bit more about how this messaging was happening there because they were also talking about defence and sovereignty. And also, how you all, because MISN was there along with other groups as you are every year, protesting this convention.

So what was the messaging and what were your actions there at that convention?

KARA: In talking with people at the conference, we have noticed quite a shift. In previous years it's been like, oh, we're concerned about supporting critical minerals for like EVs and electric cars. And this year companies were a bit more like brazen about wanting to get defence contracts, which usually they do try and hide that stuff or they don't like really talk to people about that. And so I think that was like a recurring theme.

They invited a lot of Indigenous communities right to P-DAC. They had entire panel discussions about the Ring of Fire, Chiefs from those First Nations. Again, trying to paint this picture that they're on board, that they're interested in doing this work and that critical mineral defence is good for everyone.

And so again, I think there is of course like this bulldozing. But there is also some interesting points that we found, which is that there's also some recognition that they're not going to be able to build these projects without some level of community buy-in. Which is not something we had heard too much previously to that.

And there was kind of the implication that in certain areas, not every area, but that like it doesn't matter how much money they throw at project, if there is resistance, it's going to be really hard to move forward. And I think in the Canadian case, what that will be met with is just like increased militarization and violence.

I don't really think they have any intentions of negotiating. But I think there is a recognition that maybe this fight won't be as easy as they perceive it to be without some sort of like violence to back it up.

And then I think with P-DAC, at least in our messaging, we always try to point to the impact, that Canadian mining has globally. So we had speakers from Congo Accountability Network, the Tigray group, we had speakers from the Attawapiskat, we had Anishganginga, like we had speakers from both here in so-called Canada and abroad.

And the overarching message from all these speakers, is that like mining fundamentally interrupts these communities' livelihoods in very violent ways, even

without boots on the ground violence. We talked about the climate contamination and things like that.

I think we often don't think about like how violent it is to lose access to drinking water, to lose access to like agriculture and even the pain that comes with like just losing land and the ability to be on the land for a lot of people.

KARA: But then again, too, the other messaging is we need to hold these Canadian companies accountable. So it's really hard to hold Canadian companies accountable. We're starting to see some success where like people have been able to bring like civil suits.

There was the recent Hud Bay Minerals settlement that came out, which was exciting to see. However, with this kind of shift in messaging at the federal level, it's hard to see how that can be sustained. How we could kind of build on that precedent if the government is trying to push forward this model of we need to do resource extraction at all costs.

RACHEL: And you mentioned the violence around Wet'suwet'en land defenders and I think it's really interesting 'cause it's recently come out that the same militarized corporate kind of unit of the RCMP, CRG, it's not called the CRU, it keeps getting kind of rebranded and investigated and whatever has been used also in the past few years to police Palestinian solidarity protests.

So like what gets tested at the front lines of Indigenous resistance is then rolled out to stifle anyone who is opposing this war agenda, this resource extraction agenda. And like it's been a radical increase of policing, of protest across Canada over the past few years. And like when they ramp up these other projects, it always has to be matched by a ramp up of policing to suppress resistance.

RESH: Yeah. And sort of the infrastructure around that, because there's also this competition, Toronto's involved in it too, for this new Defence Bank. Rachel, could you speak more to that?

RACHEL: Yeah, for sure. So World Beyond War has a campaign around that and is gonna be launching a bunch more about that in the coming days. So that's great timing.

So this is a War Bank. It's a new bank pitched in late 2025 and set to launch later this year. And it's really intended to serve as like a hub where public money can be used to kind of solicit more private investment in weapons and military industries.

And I think some of it comes in response to campaigns that have really successfully forced institutions worldwide to divest from weapons of war. So they're creating a whole new way of funneling money directly to arms manufacturers. 'cause clearly where investment is lacking is in the wealthiest weapons companies in the world.

And I think it's worth noting that, just a month ago we had a huge divestment victory in Canada. It's gotten some attention, but I don't think it's gotten enough attention because of the scale of what a huge win this was where we successfully, and by we I mean the organizing of many, many, many thousands of people across the country who have been tireless in this campaign for years, especially led by artists and writers, but forced Scotiabank to fully divest from Elbit Systems, Israel's biggest weapons company. Scotiabank was the largest foreign investor in Elbit in the world for a long time.

So this is huge! It's a huge movement of capital away from like one of the biggest war profiteers from Israel's genocide. A very, very successful divestment campaign. Scotia Bank now has zero shares in Elbit.

So on one level, the DSRB is not just a way to like funnel even more public funds to these extremely wealthy weapons companies, but it's also a way to kind of avoid these mechanisms that, like successful Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movements have managed to pull some of these funds away.

Yeah, it's despicable that Canada and really Toronto is seeking to be the global headquarters of this bank. And we're coming together with groups all over the place to push back against this.

We've got a bunch of tools online around this. So we've been doing lots of postering and building coalitional work in Toronto to get everyone on board with basically like, hell no this bank absolutely should not be headquartered in Toronto, Canada should not even be one of the countries involved in this bank. And like really this bank just should not exist on this planet. The last thing we need is a war bank.

RESH: Last thing we need, but what a huge victory. I mean, that is quite a step, right? Especially for a major bank and a major weapons company.

Since the start of the Trump regime's second term, we have seen US military escalations and aggressions against sovereign states. Some of which has already been mentioned here, but just to go through it again, Syria, Yemen, Nigeria, Somalia, Venezuela, now Iran, they're saying Cuba's next. Threats against Greenland. The whole Canada as the 51st State thing. And again, we are just in March.

The attacks on Iran, many fear could lead to a major even forever war.

RESH: Rachel, back to you, and I'm gonna bring you Kara in on this as well, but what do you see happening in terms of this march to war in terms of where Canada fits into all of this.

RACHEL: I'm not usually one to make these kinds of predictions.

I think it is telling that, as you kind of hinted at earlier, Canada's initial stance of really just full support for the US and Israel's initial bombing of Iran has been kind of walked back a bit, in response, I think to just like huge opposition, really also across the political spectrum, like just an enormous amount of outrage, to kind of this point of saying, oh, well we had nothing to do with this. We have no part in this. Then they were saying, oh, but maybe we'd send troops. And now they're saying, oh, actually we won't send tr.. . It's not foreign policy. It feels like saying random things on a whim and like really dangerous musings. These are not just kind of idle things to speculate about randomly in conversation as this enormous, horrific violence is happening.

So one hand it's concerning that Canada doesn't seem to have any kind of coherent foreign policy around this. On the other hand, it's encouraging that it does seem like we can have quite a bit of influence and there's a little bit of testing the waters and what can we get away with. And apparently they've decided at this point they can't get away with actually supporting this.

However, what it hides the fact is that Canada already is involved.

I mean we'll be working with some allies to launch a campaign in the coming days to shut the Canadian basin in Kuwait. To bring all Canadian troops home from West Asia. Like the fact is there already is an involvement, even just when we're talking about Canadian troops, not to mention what we've also said in terms of Canadian weapons, in terms of just like diplomatic and economic support for this war that's happening.

So while we should be absolutely pressuring the Carney government at every stand to say, absolutely no, Canada cannot play any part in this war, we also have to be clear-eyed about the ways that Canada already is involved. And more than just saying, don't get more involved, but actually saying you need to pull out our existing supports.

Just this week we had the vote on Bill C- 233, which is the No More Loopholes Act. And one of my roles is I coordinate, with a bunch of other lovely people, the Arms Embargo Now campaign. And this has been a really big push for us to change Canadian law. This wasn't a motion, this was a bill. so this was to actually change Canadian law for good around how weapons exports work in Canada.

Specifically the No More Loopholes Act really focused on the fact that right now there is no permitting requirements, no accountability, no oversight for basically all weapons that are exported from Canada to the US.

So for Canada to any other country on Earth, it's a very imperfect regime, but you would least do, if you're a company wanting to send those weapons, have to get a permit. Which means someone at Global Affairs Canada, has to at least look at what you're doing and make a decision about it.

And in the past years, we've been very, very successful as a movement forcing the government. I mean, they've been kicking and screaming the whole way, but we

forced them to cancel and to pause and suspend tons of those permits from Canada to Israel.

I mean, we mentioned Roshel earlier, the company in Brampton that makes those armored vehicles that were despicably sent to ICE. We forced the government to not approve the permits Roshel was trying to get to send those armored vehicles to Israel. So over the past few years, Roshel was unable actually to send those armored vehicles to Israel because we were able to organize around that.

But with the US it's so difficult they don't even need a permit. So it's very hard for us to be able to force the Canadian government to make any kind of right decision about sending those weapons to the US.

So we were trying to change the law, but the Bill was really shamefully voted down by the Carney government. We got 30 Liberal MPs to break rank, which is not nothing. It's by far the biggest fracture this government has had yet on a Private Member's Bill, which normally, like nobody even knows one has happened. They usually just pass with zero attention. We made a huge hubub of this one, created a mini crisis around it for the government. But the Bill was voted down. And it's clear that at this point, anything that adds any measure of accountability or traceability to Canadian weapons used in war crimes is like directly fighting in the face of Carney's main agenda right now.

So we are in like a really tricky landscape. This is really different than how it looked under the Trudeau government. They're a hundred percent resistant really to anything that interrupts this partnership between the Canadian and the US military

RESH: Full speed ahead, right. And Kara, same question to you.

How are you seeing Canada's role now, but possibly into the future?

KARA: I mean, I think it goes back to like Canada's role to supply critical minerals, right for the creation of weapons. And I think what gets really tricky about this is, like Rachel was saying earlier, we have to follow the money.

But I think it's important to note that it is extremely hard to follow the money. Just because a lot of, like these weapons manufacturers and then the mining companies that are selling to them, like these are private transactions. They don't really have to report. And so if you actually try and trace the money, it's extremely hard.

I think the other thing too is oftentimes when people sell ores, it's often mixed with ores that are gonna be used for consumer goods. So there is this mix of like defence and civilian. And Rachel and her work with World Beyond War have also pointed that out. How, like you know, they transfer weapons on passenger planes.

So I think they really do unfortunately a good job of like being able to hide how these defence weapons are moving and how even the minerals are moving from kind of

point A to point B. Mining companies are very secretive about this stuff. Even people who work there don't always know where the metals are going.

And so it's work that I think we all need to do. It's something that MISN's been talking about. But just with our other allies as well, there's people who like, know bits and pieces about the supply chain, but there's still a lot of work that needs to be done to kind of uncover how this works.

The other thing to know too is that a lot of people who back mining are also like investors in weapons manufacturers. So they have stakes throughout the process. It's not that they just have a stake in a mining company. So there's a huge incentive not just to push mines through, but again to push mines through so that you can create these like projects that create these weapons that are unfortunately then tested in conflict zones. So like battle-tested in Gaza.

And then once they're battle-tested in Gaza, that kind of triggers the process again with more intensity. So now these mining companies are more emboldened to go in and forcefully displace communities. More emboldened to violate human rights and things like that because again, there's now higher profit incentives on the line.

RESH: Right. And just to say when we're talking about weapons, yeah, it's the tanks and the guns and planes and all of those types of things. But it's also social media companies. It's the AI companies. Palantir is a big one Chat GPT these big data centers as well.

KARA: Yeah, absolutely. And those are like more tasteful investments, right, than like investing in weapons.

RESH: Yeah. And so you have schools and offices and that's just part of our daily lives. And so how do we untangle ourselves from this?

RACHEL: This was making me think about, and maybe perversely this like really bleak thing also gives me kind of some hope is that like it actually requires such an obscene amount of propaganda and fearmongering for the government and these companies to even try to begin to convince people that what we need to keep us safe is like to starve society of resources for far more pressing needs.

Like we sometimes act like, oh, well war is just kind of this human thing that naturally happens. Absolutely not. It takes an insane investment of resources.

The Canadian military has the biggest PR body in the country. We're talking about hundreds of workers whose job is propaganda to sell us on war and militarism. And the idea, that that is what we need to keep us safe.

Like war is actually very difficult to make happen. It's not like a natural human thing. And the reason it happens is because some people profit enormously from it. It's an

institution that deeply benefits some people at the expense of everything else. And frankly, mining is very, very, very similar.

I guess where I take some hope from this is like, it's amazing how much... There are days where it can really feel like it's some of us and obviously like our grassroots movements pulling together anything that we can manage to do versus these hundreds of people. And that's just in the Canadian armed forces, let alone in the weapons companies, in the mining companies, et cetera, who's full-time job is to just flood the zone with all of their propaganda.

So they have to work very hard to try to make it seem like what they're doing is common sense when in fact it isn't. But there definitely are ebbs and flows. And I think we are in a moment where we're a little bit losing the messaging battle and fear of Trump and fear of various things is really having a moment. But I guess I see this coming in waves and I see more and more people trying to connect the dots

RESH: Well, the dots need to be connected. Because it's amazing that even if we don't support this, the way in which almost every corner of our lives are sort of enmeshed within this, right?

So we mentioned the social media companies, the computer screens that we're looking at the platforms that we're using, our pensions are being invested. There's so many tentacles into this that people just aren't even aware of. So it is very important that you folks are putting out this information.

But we've got an empire in seeming decline being led by a rogue superpower and the rise of hard power and fascism. We may be standing on the precipice of World War III and depending on where one is, you're already feeling either the direct violence of militarism or the slower structural violence of hunger and housing security. And this is adding to the list of polycrisis that includes climate crisis as well. So this is a very heavy picture.

But we're fighting for something, right? We're also seeing incredible organizing solidarity happening on the ground. So, Kara, starting with you, how can people become involved? How can they connect with MISN and the movements that you are working with?

KARA: Yeah, I mean, we are a grassroots collective. We do accept new members. But something I do wanna point out right now in that maybe there is a bit of hope in this conversation is that I think MISN has been thinking about mining and militarism for a few years now. And we are putting together a zine and we put together this educational tool kind of pointing out these connections. And we just had our first teach-in. And we were so overwhelmed by the amount of people who wanted to come. We didn't have a big enough space, so we unfortunately had to turn people away. And when we did the teach-in, it seemed like people were really hungry for this information. Just like wanting to give them clarity, like what happens at this stage of the process so that they know where they can intervene.

Another reason we've been doing this work is 'cause for years we get frontline communities reaching out, asking like, what's going to be happening at this stage? And so our goal is to kind of like put all this information together concisely. And it's been really exciting too because we're seeing so many other organizations thinking about mining and militarism. And it seems like it's a conversation that people wanna have.

So *Yes to Life, No to Mining* is working on this kind of series of mining and militarism as well right now. Mining Watch is also kind of thinking about this as well. And then I think with mining and militarism too, it's like there's so many ways to get other communities involved in this work.

I think Congo Accountability Network as well has been doing a lot of work on this topic specifically the connection between like what goes on to Gaza and how that triggers more mining in places like Congo.

So, while it is a terrible time, I do feel hope in the fact that I think a lot of people are starting to ask more questions. They're wanting to know like, Hey, how is this actually connected? I don't just wanna think about this in the abstract, but how does the ore get transported from a mine at Barrick Gold? How does it end up in a weapons factory?

And I think the work that World Beyond War is doing is also super important, right? Because they're trying to figure out like how do these ores become weapons? And then how are they transported to battle zones?

So I think pushing forward like more transparency in these chains.

The other thing I kind of, we've been thinking about with the tech-in too is it brought together so many people from different movements that I think have different insights and skills.

So we had one labour organizer like, had worked years, for like a pension company. And so he had a lot of insight into like, decisions that are being made behind the scenes. And he's a board member as well.

There's so many ways for us to expand on this work. And so trying to make it as accessible as possible. And we want this work to be just like a very baseline, a building block that we can continue to build on, but other people can continue to build on. And I personally am just like really excited to see the interest that people are having.

What we heard too is people were like, oh, I actually had no idea that this was happening. And so they were like, oh, you know, this makes me think of this conversation I was having with somebody with one of the communities we support in the Philippines.

Another MISN and I member we're in a meeting and we were talking with an organization that's supporting frontliners on the border between Canada and the US. And we were just sharing some information like, oh, this is a really critical time for you to intervene.

Usually like when they're about like stage three when they're kind of laying the groundwork for the mine, that's the best chance you have at stopping a mine. Because once the mine is built, it's not going to be dismantled. And they were like, oh, we didn't realize this was such a critical moment.

So I think again, too, it's like getting that information to people. And something that we've tried to do in our work too is like highlight stories of resistance. So how has this community resisted and how could your community potentially use this strategy?

And so again, just giving people the information, it's all kind of there, but putting it in one place so that they can quickly look at it and see what's going on and strategize around that.

RESH: Thank you. And there is a lot of hope and there is a lot of momentum. And Rachel, the same question to you. This is a global solidarity that we're seeing around the world. So how can listeners, how can people get involved?

RACHEL: Yeah, I'm, I'm seeing lots of folks taking up local struggles in ways that feel really exciting to me.

I mean, so on the same day just this week where the No More Loopholes Bill was voted down in Parliament. On that exact same day, folks in Brampton managed to pass a historic resolution at Brampton City Council making Brampton officially join the pledge of being an apartheid-free community. And that included the demand for an arms embargo.

So Brampton Mayor is now sending a letter to the federal government demanding an arms embargo on Israel. It included support for Bill C-233 and to close loopholes in Canada's arms exports.

I mean, even those are just quite narrow area of kind of like voting in-house government kind of victories. But even on the exact same day in Canada, there was like this defeat in the House of Commons and this win at a city level battle. Like I'm seeing that all the time.

And for example, looking at kind of connecting the issues that we've been talking about today, there's been really inspiring resistance around the Sisson mine in New Brunswick, which is a mine again, that's aimed to produce critical minerals for military use and that the US Department of Defence has invested, I think it's over \$20 million in funding to get this mine off the ground. Like again, showing who is deciding what mining projects should go forward in so-called Canada.

But seeing like the local Indigenous resistance, environmentalists across New Brunswick and the Atlantic provinces coming together. Where as always like eyes on the front lines. And that's I think where I take a lot of inspiration, but also like feel a lot of responsibility to jump in and to support .

The Arms Embargo Now campaign yes spent the last few months with quite a bit of focus on this Bill, but existed long before this legislation project and will continue to exist.

Like, I could not believe a month ago in February, we kind of called a day of action around this No More Loopholes Bill and it suggested that people make it really clear that they were asking their member of parliament to pick a side, and it was the side of Trump and Netanyahu and war crimes and genocide, or it was the side of human rights and international law.

Called this Day of Action and we knew some people would be interested in it. But I mean this is a pretty technical bill about like the nitty gritty, like arms export laws of Canada. We were blown away, like there were well over 50 protests all across Canada. Not like one or two people like large protests and actions, from like White Horse to like both coasts and every province in between. It really blew my mind how much people were taking this up in their local community and had built up local infrastructure in order to exert local pressure on their member of parliament.

I should say in addition to the 30 Liberal MPs I mentioned, who broke rank, there were a number of Conservatives, which is quite shocking, who abstained from voting on that bill as well. And that's all testament to kind of local power.

RACHEL: And I mean, it was about the bill, but really it's not about the Bill. And I think once people build up the skills and the connections and the local organizing heft to be able to do that kind of resistance, once people discover their local weapons factory, it's like they don't forget that, right?

Yeah, the movement muscle across the country to be able to take some really strong action around this much bigger strategy and bender Canada's on around militarism and war. I think we're really building up the ability to take it on head on in the coming, coming months and years.

RESH: Absolutely. I mean, there's a, an amazing amount of energy out there and that people are paying attention to these bills that they're politicizing themselves and building political literacy around that.

So the final question, because we have all of these fantastic actions that are happening, what is the vision at the end of all of this? And Kara, what does a demilitarized, non-extractivist economy, society, nation, world look like to you?

KARA: I think that starts with like recognizing Indigenous sovereignty here in so-called Canada, to the point where like Indigenous communities have the right to say no and that they can choose their own development.

And I think that people in Canada are on board and are supportive of that and are willing to stand with them and defend that right to say no, which is going to be so important in the next coming months.

Of course, Canadian mining does all these horrible things abroad, but I think until we actually reconcile with what we're doing here in Canada to Indigenous people, it's going to be really hard to kind of stop that machine globally.

I think it's also important to recognize that mining in Ontario, right? Like that's usually a case study for how they're going to execute projects abroad, for example. And so again, we have to kind of shut this down in our own backyard and say that this is not okay, we're not going to accept that. We need to interrupt supply chains. We need to follow the money and hold those people accountable.

Because again, if you don't get to the root of the problem, which is this idea that you can just simply go on to land and take what you want, you don't have to respect the people who live there. You don't have to respect kind of the watersheds, the air quality, all these important things that help us sustain life. Until you change that mindset, nothing is going to change.

Demilitarization is a hundred percent contingent on respecting Indigenous sovereignty and respecting them as stewards of the land.

RESH: Thank you for that. And Rachel, in terms of a more hopeful alternative future, what does real defence and genuine security look like?

RACHEL: Yeah, I really appreciated what Kara had to say there. I think it does all start with decolonization and not in a token way, but in a real way.

Yeah, I mean, World Beyond War is an abolitionist org and project, which means that everything that we do, we make sure that we're pointed towards that horizon of communities and worlds that do not rely on state violence to ensure compliance and that extends through militarism, but also a world without police, without prisons, without the violence of borders.

What does it mean to have a world and communities where we prioritize caring for each other, meeting our needs as people, and dissent that does not rely on these just terrifically violent state institutions to shut it down.

And there are versions of all of this all over the world. This is not some utopian vision. There are countries that don't have militaries and that have abolished their militaries. There are whole zones that have eliminated policing, that have kicked out colonizers.

I personally always take a ton of inspiration from the Zapatista movement and very, very ongoing land struggles in Chiapas and Oaxaca right now. And the ability that they have had to, yeah, to kick out all forces of state violence from their territory for many decades now. Like there are examples of this all around us, is what I'm saying. It's not a pipe dream.

And Canada's clearly moving in the opposite direction, as we've said from these visions right now.

But sometimes when things are kind of starkly terrible and when the violence that we've been all swimming in for many years becomes just really much more clear and visible can also be a moment where there can be more radical change. And I think people are really interested in exploring these visions of, yeah, what does it mean to have a community, a world, country, et cetera, that is not kind of relying on fear and racism and environmental destruction to keep going.

Like none of us want that.

RESH: No, absolutely not. But with that, Rachel and Kara, thank you so much. It has been a pleasure.

RACHEL: Thank you.

KARA: Thank you so much.

RESH: That was Rachel Small Canada organizer for World Beyond War and Coordinator of the Arms Embargo Now Campaign. And Kara Anderson, organizer with The Mining Injustice Solidarity Network. And this is The Courage My Friends podcast.

I'm your host, Resh Budhu. Thanks for listening.

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