

# WPC Operations Manager Speaks at International Conference “WHAT MEDIA FOR PEACE?”

*Denounces mainstream media terrorism; promotes independent media organization*

Women’s Press Collective (WPC) Operations Manager Lisa Daniell spoke by Skype at an international conference in Switzerland in October 2022, answering the title question “What Media for Peace?” by describing WPC’s approach to building alternative media. The two-day conference attracted over a hundred participants. It was organized by WPC Board of Directors member and European Correspondent Natalie Benelli on behalf of the Geneva International Peace Research Institute (GIPRI), ALBA Suiza and the Association Switzerland-Cuba (ASC) with support of the Swiss Peace Movement.

National and international speakers provided in-depth analysis of media terrorism, including use of targeted disinformation promulgated by the mainstream press, television, radio, digital media and social networks against countries that oppose the foreign policy of the U.S., EU and Swiss governments, along with NATO hegemony. The conference promoted the necessity for community-based alternative media organizations to tell the truth and build world peace.

## Mainstream media at the service of wealthy minority

In his welcoming address, GIPRI President Gabriel Galice quoted theoretical physicist Albert Einstein, who pointed to the press in the 1930s as a powerful tool in the hands of the economic and political minority to impose its will on the majority of the people.

UK-based investigative journalist Alan MacLeod warned the audience “the media is not your friend.” It is “the voice of the powerful,” whose role is “to shape public opinion in a way that advances the interests of their billionaire owners and advertisers.”

Three corporations control over 70% of newspaper circulation in Great Britain. Finland’s four largest TV operators reach

*WPC Operations Manager Lisa Daniell (on screen) spoke by video and Skype at the “What Media for Peace?” conference. Daniell described WPC’s approach to building truly independent, community-based alternative press to promote truthful reporting as a mechanism for building world peace.*



Photo by Sâmi Wanitsch



Photo by François Page

*Among the speakers was Christian Müller, who worked as a journalist in mainstream Swiss media companies for decades. He left the profession, decrying the role of mainstream media as “warmongers,” whose coverage promotes and justifies war.*

*Natalie Benelli (right), WPC’s European Correspondent, organized the event and was the moderator. Benelli is seen here with Anna Meyer, one of the volunteers, ran the sound equipment for both days of the conference.*



Photo by Matthias Zimmermann

Photo by François Page



*UK-based investigative journalist Alan MacLeod, whose writings are published on MintPress, spoke at the conference on October 15, 2022. MacLeod warned the audience that "the media is not your friend," and that its role is "to shape public opinion in a way that advances the interests of [its] billionaire owners and advertisers." Ursula Cross provides translation for the German speaking audience.*

92% of viewers and take home 97% of the profits. Switzerland's TX Group controls half of the Swiss media market.

Control by media corporations goes far beyond the media. MacLeod quoted Indian journalist Palagumi Sainath according to whom the media are "big players in fields ranging from agriculture to aviation, from sugar to stock markets, from finance to fashion, from management to mining."

### **CIA & Co. control digital media**

Several speakers pointed to digital media ownership and content control, with giant monopolies such as Amazon, Google and Meta dominating the internet.

An investigation by MintPress News determined that Facebook, TikTok, Google and Twitter have hired hundreds of officials from the CIA, NSA, FBI and NATO to censor social media content that does not serve the interests of the military-industrial complex and finance capital.

Independent journalists who provide alternative information are de-platformed (their accounts are closed and blocked) and their PayPal accounts are shut down to prevent them from earning a living.

### **War propaganda through social media**

Karin Leukefeld, a Middle East correspondent, pointed to the use of social media by armed groups in conflict zones to share war propaganda with viewers worldwide. While this news is hard to verify, it has life-threatening consequences.

In April of 2018, a group called "White Helmets" reported via social media on a poison gas attack on the Syrian city of Douma allegedly perpetrated by the Syrian army. Syria's government rejected the accusation and called for an investigation by experts of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

The U.S., Great Britain and France (all UN Security Council nations with veto power) launched a "retaliatory attack" against Syria without a decision by the UN Security Council. The OPCW experts were banned from traveling to Syria



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“for security reasons” because of the air-strikes and were prevented from carrying out the investigation. Neither the U.S., nor Great Britain or France had been attacked by Syria — a massive violation of the UN Charter.

**Mainstream press promotes war**

Former Swiss intelligence officer Jacques Baud, GIPRI analyst Gilles-Emmanuel Jacquet and independent journalist Christian Müller, who renounced his career in the mainstream media for ethical reasons, provided numerous examples of warmongering by mainstream media, distorting historical facts or lying about countries that do not submit to U.S. foreign policy. Speaking to the current conflict between NATO and Russia in the Ukraine, Müller condemned the Swiss mainstream press’ call to “fight Russia on the battlefield” rather than negotiate peace.

**Organize independent media for peace!**

Daniell emphasized that strong independent media needs collective organization firmly rooted in the community. To report truthfully on working peoples’ realities, WPC uses print as a tool for arms-length grassroots organizing that does not depend on technology controlled by the wealthy. “The face-to-face distribution of printed materials is the best way to get people involved and build strong organization with deep roots in the community to take on the battles to end poverty, hunger and more — which are not won through a single engagement,” Daniell stated. “If we want independent press that can last and become a force to be reckoned with, we need to do not only reporting, but also organizing.”

“Daniell’s statement is key, as she shows how to take action and build a press that works for the majority of us,” stated Matthias Zimmermann, one of the volunteers at the conference. ■

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Saturdays 3pm to 4pm**

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on 40 years of hard work!*

*Continued success  
for many years to come.*

*Janis Russell & Mike Weatherly*

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