



Special Convention Edition

# VETERANS FOR PEACE

## 2002 VETERANS FOR PEACE CONVENTION REPORT

From August 15-18, over 200 veterans and supporters from 22 states gathered in Duluth, Minnesota to discuss issues, debate priorities and plan the direction of Veterans For Peace. Aside from an enhanced sense of unity, our major accomplishment was the production of fourteen vital resolutions at the annual business meeting. They are the central feature of this newsletter. You are encouraged to circulate them as widely as possible.

Our weekend began with a meeting of the Board of Directors, Thursday morning. A number of early arrivals sat in, learning how the board operates, expressing their views. Later, we unwound and enjoyed each other's fellowship during a delightful evening cruise on Lake Superior.

The next day, Chapter 80 President Barry Hanson, greeted us and introduced Minneapolis Professor Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer, who keynoted the convention with his address: "What Is Real Patriotism?"

It isn't mindless flag waving and blind obedience to government. It is where love of country and love of the world intersect. It is an honest assessment of our country's many failings, including colossal arrogance and drunken obsession with military power. It is the patriotic duty of every citizen to counter destructive pseudo-patriotism, threatening the world with destruction with real patriotism, reflected by acts of peacemaking and resistance.

Later, Dr. Bob Kosuth argued that the historical cause of war has been economic inequities and the way to end war is thru global economic justice and participatory democracy. He provoked an interesting discussion about the nature of the American economic system.

Charles Litkey, a Medal of Honor recipient and long time VFP member, outlined the challenges facing veteran peace activists today. He reported current developments in the campaign to close the US Army's "School of Assassins" at Fort Benning, Georgia. He also called for organizing a veterans peace delegation to Palestine and Israel. Planning meetings were later held. More information will be available soon.

In between the plenary sessions, a series of lively and informative workshops took place on a number of topics including the International Criminal Court, PTSD, Iraq, GI rights and Counter-Recruitment, Korea, Corporate Power vs. Democracy, Nonviolent Peaceforce, Nuclear Weapons, and Plan Colombia.

Diane Carlson Evans, Chair of the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project, responsible for the nurses' memorial statue facing "The Wall, spoke so realistically about the grim realities faced by nurses and grunts that it brought back memories, some good and many bad, that all of us needed to be reminded of. She said, "When I came home I didn't become a veteran against the Vietnam War. I tried to put it behind me. But you can't just put it behind you. That's why today I'm a veteran for peace." After the convention she wrote in from Missoula, Montana and joined VFP.

Dr. Robert Bowman, retired Air Force Lt. Colonel, and a candidate for the Reform Party nomination in the last presidential election, delivered a blistering indictment of current government domestic and foreign policies in his speech, "Veterans and National Security". We hope Dr. Bowman is heard by many more Americans in future campaigns.

The traditional Soapbox /Speakout, impressed me with the scope of activity and the high level of activism of members and chapters. Veterans For Peace is obviously on the move, addressing major concerns facing our country and the world in many communities.

Woody Powell, our National Administrator, reported on the state of the National Office one year since moving from Washington, DC to St. Louis. Woody and the office staff have done a great job. (See Woody's report.)

During the final banquet, Saturday evening, special VFP awards "in recognition of service to the cause of world peace", were presented to: David Silk, Wendell Garton, Lisandro "Andy" Rivera, William Nemcik, Tom Sager, Art Dorland, Trish Kanous, Michael Lessard, Amira Matsuda, Robin Wagar, Yumi Kikuchi and Greg Nees.

Finally, our heartfelt thanks to Andy Anderson, point man and prime mover, and the members of Chapter 80, who did such a great job organizing and hosting the gathering.

Our next national convention will be held in San Francisco in August 2003. Mark it on your calendar now and begin saving your money.

*David Cline, President*



Summer 2002

College of Scholastica, Duluth, MN  
Photo by Lincoln Grahlf

# NATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

In the last eleven months, Veterans For Peace has increased its paid membership from 600 to over 1850 members. We believe the heavily militaristic response to the attack on the Trade Towers and the Pentagon, coupled with a functioning, full-time office since that time, are the major reasons for our increase. Many old members have returned, many new members have found us and joined. We are beginning to experience an exponential rate of growth.

Your National Office is open five days a week, from 9:00 to 5:00 (more when necessary). It is staffed by three part-time paid staff, Kim Gaynor (Office Manager), Ruth Flaney (Research Librarian), and Gabriela Inderwies (Outreach Coordinator).

## Chapter Vitality

We welcomed two new chapters at the Duluth convention, Chapter 55 - Santa Fe, New Mexico, Ken Mayers, founding president, and Chapter 87, Sacramento, California, Pat Driscoll, founding president.

In addition, the New Jersey chapter has sprung back to life, along with the Smedley Butler Chapter in Pennsylvania and chapters in New Hampshire, Indiana, Ohio, Washington State, Oregon, etc. New chapters are forming in North Carolina and Alaska.

## Website Effectiveness

A strong recruiting tool has been the development of the Veterans For Peace website ([www.veteransforpeace.org](http://www.veteransforpeace.org)), which, under the management of Lee Vander Laan and Jozef

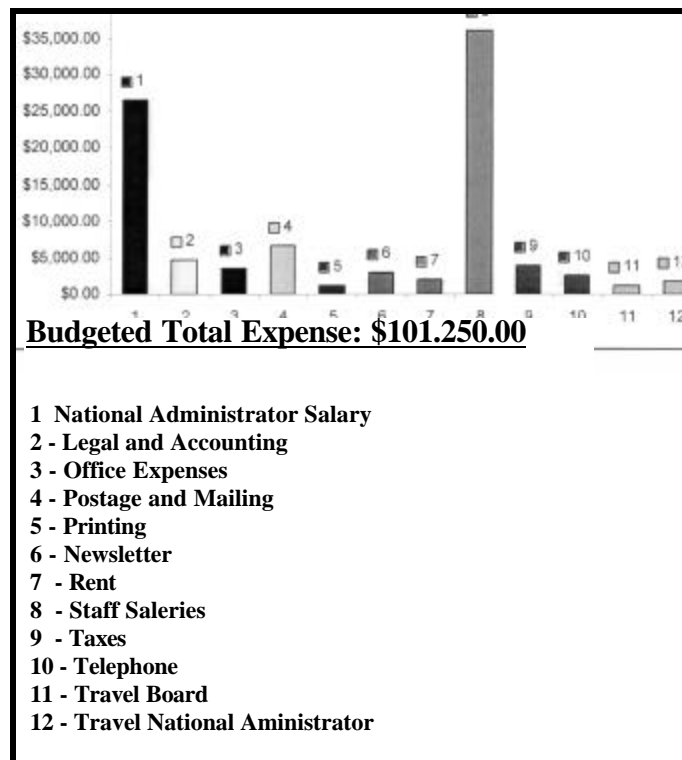
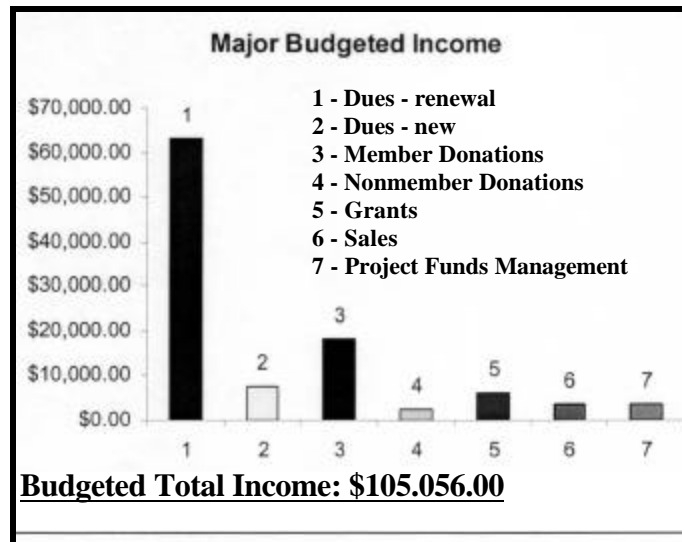
Hand-Boniakowski, has become a very accurate, timely and effective representation of who we are and what we do. Indeed, the "hits" counter has shown a jump from 6000 to 10,000 in less than a week. It's been accelerating as more links are forged with like-minded organizations

and the word is getting out.

## Major Services

1. Electronic and hardcopy files on most topics relating to war and peace making to help you with speaking engagements.

2. Managing the funds for various projects, including the highly-successful Iraq Water Project, the Korea Peace Campaign, Prisoner of Conscience Fund, (POC) and Zones of Concern and Struggle (ZOCS).
3. Contact with other chapters, members and allied organizations.
4. Membership brochures and other literature.
5. Newsletter source materials.
6. Newsletter and literature production.
7. VFP tabling merchandise, buttons, T-shirts, caps, etc.
8. Video lending library for presentations
9. Book lists
10. Up-to-date information through e-groups moderation.
11. Venue for special appeals to membership and other organizations.
12. Media kits and media dissemination through e-mail.



## Finances

Our assets have increased from about \$30,000 to over \$90,000, thanks to the generosity of the membership and outside donors, like the Global Peace Campaign, who raised more than enough money to buy full page ads sponsored by VFP in the New York Times and the Los Angeles Times.

Our budget for 2003 is bare-bones (see charts). Our staff is barely adequate to the

growing demand for the services. Throughout this difficult, sometimes tumultuous period of national stress and internal growth, we have striven to be as responsive to membership needs as possible.

### **Paying The Price of Peacemaking**

But we are stretched . Your administrator needs more time; time to work with the board on policy matters, developing outreach tools, cultivating media, coordinating chapter activities and actions with allied organizations - all the up-front functions implied by the position. (An average of 5 hours per day is spent fielding e-mails and dealing with the propositions and proposals and requests that come in daily.)

We are developing staff to take over more routine activities, such as managing day-to-day data input, handling mail, responding to chapter and member inquiries of a routine nature, collecting on-line information and filing it for later retrieval. We also need more space - which can be developed right here in St. Louis, at minimal cost.

### **The Need Is Now**

Our administration is flexing its military muscle

around the world, avoiding the counsel of allies, threatening to put our children's and our grandchildren's lives at risk in another war. We need to respond as a cohesive organization with ample resources to get out the message that war is indeed a failed instrument of international policy and must be replaced with thoughtful diplomacy and policies of fairness and justice throughout the world. It should be obvious that \$25.00 a year is not enough to cover the costs of running this office, producing and mailing a quality quarterly newsletter, developing and providing the resources we need to effectively work for Peace.

We ask everyone to contribute over and above their basic dues, to the extent they can, to support our growing needs.



Wilson (Woody) Powell

## **RESOLUTIONS**

### **RESOLUTION - ENDLESS WAR**

The response of the US Government to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 has initiated policies which have already restricted civil liberties through passage of the Patriot Act and other repressive legislation, justified a military assault against Afghanistan and promised endless war against many other countries.

We believe that the jingoistic brand of counterfeit patriotism generated by the administration's actions and statements is stifling dissent and threatens genuine security for the people of this country.

The resulting massive increase in military spending threatens social programs that should be serving to improve people's lives both here and abroad.

These actions, combined with our retreat from a host of international disarmament, environmental and criminal justice treaties, threaten democracy at home and diminish the prospects for peace and stability in the world.

THEREFORE, Veterans For Peace calls for an end to endless US wars and insists that assaults upon our constitutional rights be rescinded. Our government must stop functioning unilaterally and become a responsible member of the community of nations.

We commit ourselves to the struggle of re-directing our government toward these ends.

### **OPPOSITION TO THE IRAQ WAR**

WHEREAS, the threatened invasion of Iraq by US military forces appears to be imminent, and

WHEREAS, there has been no credible evidence offered that Iraq possesses or is developing weapons of mass destruction with the intention of using them against the US or any other nation, and there is testimony from former

UN weapons inspector Scott Ritter, that the UN team concluded that no such capability existed then and is unlikely to exist in the present, and

WHEREAS, there has been no credible evidence offered linking Iraq with the terrorist organization Al Qaida or any other terrorist organization threatening the US or any other nation, and

WHEREAS, any further military action would only inflict greater injury upon innocent people, mostly civilians, already suffering from unrelenting bombing and sanctions imposed over the last eleven years and would certainly destroy that country's already severely damaged infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, any further military action is likely to more deeply undermine our national security by inflaming and adding to the number of those who find our policies at the least objectionable and often criminal, and

WHEREAS, further military action against Iraq will place the lives of US military personnel in jeopardy resulting in unnecessary death and injury to them, and

WHEREAS, the impending escalation of military action is just one more example of the US habit of applying military force to the solution of political problems, in violation of the UN charter and international law, that has already made us a pariah within most of the international community, including staunch allies of former times,

THEREFORE, be it resolved that Veterans For Peace opposes any military action against Iraq.

### **RESOLUTION-ISRAEL/PALESTINE PEACE**

WHEREAS, the Middle East conflict continues to cause loss of life for Palestinians and Israelis, and

WHEREAS, continuation of this conflict threatens the

security of the world, and

WHEREAS, the efforts of the U.S. to mediate a peace treaty have been rebuffed by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, and

WHEREAS, Prime Minister Sharon refuses to withdraw from occupation of the Palestine Territories -

THEREFORE, in the recognition of the absolute need for Palestine and Israel to co-exist in Peace, Veterans For Peace calls for the US government to cut off all economic and military aid to the state of Israel until the following conditions are met:

1. The withdrawal of all Israeli presence to the boundaries defined by UN Resolution 242.
2. The establishment of a Palestinian State in the now-occupied territory.
3. The return of Israel to its original borders.

### **RESOLUTION ON INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**

WHEREAS, one of the main purposes of Veterans For Peace is to abolish war as an instrument of foreign policy, and

WHEREAS, the international community established the International Criminal Court (ICC) on July 1, 2002 to prosecute those individuals who would commit serious war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide in the future, and

WHEREAS, successful operation of the ICC will contribute greatly to further development of international justice and peace-detering future commission of serious war crimes or naked aggression, and

WHEREAS, the U.S. government is shamefully taking active measures to oppose and undermine the ICC at this time,

THEREFORE, Veterans for Peace (VFP), meeting at its national convention in Duluth, Minnesota, August 17, 2002,

- 1) Calls upon the US to stop its unjust, short-sighted opposition to the ICC immediately and join the Court at once; and
- 2) Urges all VFP members and chapters to wage an active campaign in support of the ICC.

### **KOREA**

WHEREAS, we are now observing the 50th anniversary of the Korean War, and

WHEREAS, the undeclared Korean War is still continuing to this day due to the lack of a peace treaty or a permanent peace settlement between the U.S. and North Korea, and

WHEREAS, the U.S. owes a heavy responsibility for the artificial division of Korea in 1945, establishment of a separate government in South Korea in 1948, the horrendous bombing and killing of three million Korean civilians during the Korean War, the fanning of the arms race and tensions on the Korean peninsula, and continuous interference

in the internal affairs of the Korean people, and

WHEREAS, government leaders of South and North Korea have held a historic summit meeting and issued a Joint Declaration on June 15, 2000, promising to achieve a peaceful reunification of their country on their own initiative through mutual exchanges and cooperation, and

WHEREAS, the continued presence of U.S. military in South Korea has been a major source of tension, arms race and rising anti-American sentiment in Korea due to the commission of numerous crimes against South Korean civilians, including the tragic killing of two high school girls by a U.S. armored vehicle on June 13, 2002;

THEREFORE, Veterans for Peace (VFP), meeting at its national convention in Duluth, Minnesota, August 17, 2002,

- 1) Calls upon our government to stop all threats of pre-emptive military strikes against North Korea and enter into serious negotiations with North Korea to end the Korean War officially by signing a peace treaty and normalizing our relations with North Korea;
- 2) Extends our support and solidarity to the Korean peoples' just struggle to achieve an independent, peaceful reunification of Korea through their own efforts without foreign interference;
- 3) Calls for the immediate re-start of the withdrawal of our 37,000 troops from South Korea;
- 4) Calls upon our government to honor the right of the South Korean government to prosecute U.S. military personnel stationed in Korea who are accused of crimes against Korean civilians.
- 5) Calls upon our government to establish an independent commission to investigate U.S. war crimes committed in Korea and provide a formal apology and reparation to the Korean victims of U.S. war crimes, including the civilian victims of No Gun Ri massacre in South Korea; and
- 6) Urges all VFP members and other fellow Americans to wage an active campaign to realize a permanent peace and reconciliation in Korea.

### **RESOLUTION ON VIETNAM**

WHEREAS, the United States conducted an illegal, undeclared war in Vietnam from 1954-1975 which cost the lives of over 58,000 Americans and 3 million Vietnamese along with millions more injured and crippled and much of that country left in ruins, and

WHEREAS, the United States government never fulfilled the commitments it made in the Paris Peace Agreement to provide economic aid to Vietnam for post war reconstruction and to heal the wounds of war, and

WHEREAS, after the war ended, the US government pursued a hostile policy aimed at isolating and punishing Vietnam until 1994 when the trade embargo was lifted and 1995 when normal diplomatic relations were established between our two countries, and

WHEREAS, the government of Vietnam has shown a continuing desire for friendly relations and has cooperated

with and assisted in the search for US servicemen still listed as missing in action, and

WHEREAS, during that war, the US military used chemical defoliants (Agents Orange, Blue, Green, Pink, Purple and White) which contained dioxin, an extremely toxic substance that causes serious long term damage to the environment and severe health problems, including cancers and birth defects, in human beings, and

WHEREAS, many landmines and unexploded bombs still litter the countryside and regularly kill or maim Vietnamese citizens, and

WHEREAS, some political forces in the United States continue to demand national policies hostile to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and

WHEREAS, many members of our organization are Vietnam veterans who strongly feel it is our duty to help heal the wounds of the war and build bonds of friendship between our two countries and peoples,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Veterans For Peace, assembled at our 2002 National Convention, do reaffirm our belief that it is right and just and in our best interest as a country to pursue a policy of peace, reconciliation and friendship between the people and governments of the United States and Vietnam,

-- and that we call on the US government to increase assistance for programs to locate and disarm unexploded ordnance so as to put an end to this deadly legacy of the US military intervention there,

-- and that we support and encourage further joint scientific study of the effects of chemical defoliants on people and the earth, the results of which could benefit both Americans and Vietnamese who are sick from Agent Orange related diseases,

-- and that we demand that our government and its citizens accept responsibility for the use of these chemical weapons and provide medical treatment and compensation to those Vietnamese citizens as well as the American veterans who suffer from the negative health effects of their exposure to Agent Orange/dioxin,

-- and that we call on our elected representatives in Congress to reject the so-called "Vietnam Human Rights Act" (HR 2833) which is an affront to the Vietnamese people's right of self determination and is contrary to a genuine policy of peace, reconciliation and friendship,

-- and that we extend our greetings and solidarity to the veterans and all the people of Vietnam in their efforts to rebuild their country as a free and just society for the benefit of all.

## **RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A PRIVATELY FUNDED PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE FUND**

Propose: that the VFP Board of Directors, with the consent of the membership, establish a Veterans For Peace Prisoner of Conscience fund (VFP/POC) to provide financial assistance to those who suffer jail time and/or a fine for their act of conscience, if it is sought.

The VFP/POC fund, generated by private, not membership funds, will be governed by guidelines that a committee, appointed by the president, will submit to the VFP Board for final approval.

Rationale:

This resolution is an outgrowth of my recent desire to give support to the SOA prisoners of conscience. It has always been my concern that those who risk jail and fines deserve support, if they seek it.

In addition to the fine, there is often a loss of income from their altered economic status.

## **RESOLUTION ON VIEQUES**

WHEREAS, the island of Vieques has been used for naval target practices and joint military exercises for more than 60 years, and

WHEREAS, these constant practices of shelling and bombardment have permanently damaged the east coast topography of Vieques, where mountains have been leveled, the vegetation has been scorched and burned and thousands of craters have been hammered into the landscape affecting and destroying the natural habitat of countless of species of flora and fauna, thus transforming this rich tropical Caribbean island paradise into an ecological disaster of catastrophic proportions, and

WHEREAS, these constant practices have also become a threat to the people of Vieques due to the closeness of the populated areas to the target zone, where lethal substances and toxic heavy metals contained in the ordnance exploded are constantly released into the wind, the soil, the subsoil and the underground system of aquifers that run across and underneath the surface of the island feeding its water deposits and natural wells, therefore polluting the air, the land, the water and eventually the food chain, and

WHEREAS, these practices have included the illegal use of napalm and depleted uranium shells, and

WHEREAS, it is a known fact that the population of Vieques suffers from a series of health problems, disorders and children's diseases significantly different than the other municipalities of the Puerto Rican nation, including an alarming cancer rate of more than 27 percent over the rest of the population of the archipelago of Puerto Rico and

WHEREAS, it is also a known fact that the only difference between the people of Vieques and the rest of the population of the archipelago of Puerto Rico is the U.S. naval presence with its shelling practices and joint military interventions where literally, if not with a sense of irony, the material evidence of the "smoking gun" as the disease propagator is flagrantly palpable and visible in the Navy's own hands, and

WHEREAS, even though the civilian population of Vieques is economically strangled due to the fact that the Navy on its own imperial arrogance has usurped and expropriated two thirds of their land thus preventing economic development opportunities, provoking an unemployment rate of over 60 percent and forcing a massive

diaspora of Viequenses to the rest of the Puerto Rican archipelago and to the neighboring Virgin Islands, and WHEREAS, even though this economic stagnation has created a symbiotic relationship between the Navy and some of the people of Vieques very similar to a “hostage syndrome” situation, where a few have found economic relief for themselves and their families through finding jobs on the naval base as security guards, handy men and other servile labor, thus generating an artificial sympathy for their “only source of employment” which the Navy distorts and exploits towards its own interests as good public relations, and

WHEREAS, even though economic dependence on Federal Government funding such as HUD financial aid, DA food stamps, Social Security payments or even Veterans acquired benefits have been manipulated by the naval authorities, using local corrupt politicians to issue warnings such as “if the Navy leaves you will lose your benefits”, the people of Vieques have responded, through the democratic mechanism of an electoral plebiscite that took place during the summer of 2001, by an overwhelming majority of 70 percent, against the Navy’s presence and its war games, asking for the immediate cessation of such practices, the total withdrawal from the island of the military forces and the cleaning, decontamination and devolution of the usurped land and territory, and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of the Puerto Rican people living in the rest of the archipelago and in the U.S. have also expressed their will by demanding an end to U.S. military intervention in Vieques as has been evidenced by massive demonstrations and civil disobedience campaigns resulting in the arrest and prosecution by the U.S. Federal Court in Puerto Rico of over fifteen hundred activists including prominent members of the Puerto Rican community such as the presidents of both legislative chambers, various senators and legislators representing all political parties, many religious, labor and civil rights leaders, several mayors from towns and cities across the archipelago of Puerto Rico including Dámaso Serrano, who, besides being the mayor of Vieques is also a Vietnam veteran himself, and

WHEREAS, the president of the US, Mr. George W. Bush, who has personally stated that “they don’t want us there”, has verbally pronounced and promised the total withdrawal of the Navy from Vieques by the month of May of the year 2003,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT VETERANS FOR PEACE WILL:**

(A) Write a letter to Mr. George W. Bush respectfully demanding a Presidential Executive Order for the immediate cessation of all Naval and joint military exercises in Vieques; the cleaning, decontamination and devolution of all the expropriated land to the people of Vieques and the total withdrawal of all naval forces from Vieques by and not later than May, 2003 and

(B) Urge all its members to request their particular congressmen or congresswomen to write to the President

respectfully demanding such Executive Order and

(C) Endorse and urge all its members to participate on September 23rd in the “International Day of Solidarity with Vieques” as proposed by the organization War Resister International, where there will be demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience in front of U.S. Embassies and consulates all over the world demanding the immediate cessation of military exercises in Vieques and

(D) Organize a delegation of Veterans to visit Vieques during the month of May in 2003, to serve as observers to the process of the Navy’s departure.

## **RESOLUTION REGARDING THE JUNE 1967 ATTACK ON THE USS LIBERTY**

WHEREAS, for democracy to work in determining governmental actions in a democratic society, all citizens need prompt accurate access to information relevant to policies and actions of their government, and

WHEREAS, in times of national attack and security threats in our country, temporary withholding of information is often necessary to protect lives and communities, and

WHEREAS, in order for a society to learn from history citizens need to have full access to all information available about incidents that occur (sinking of the Maine, Tonkin Gulf attack, My Lai), and

WHEREAS, the attack on an unarmed United States naval vessel U.S.S. Liberty on June 8, 1967, has never received full or honest disclosure and Naval personnel who served on the U.S.S. liberty on June 8, 1967 have been threatened with severe punishment if they described their experiences of this attack which resulted in the death of 34 U.S. servicemen and the wounding of 172 sailors, and

WHEREAS, the Liberty’s Captain and the members of the crew all stated they believe the Israelis planned to leave no survivors to describe the attack, and

WHEREAS, the U.S.S. Liberty is the most decorated ship in the history of the US Navy: The Medal of Honor for the Skipper, Captain William McGonagle; two Navy Crosses; 11 Silver Stars; 23 Bronze Stars; 206 Purple Hearts, and the Presidential unit Citation,

THEREFORE, be it Resolved that the United States Congress initiates an in depth, full and honest investigation into the events of that day, June 8, 1967, in relation to the attack on the U.S.S. Liberty.

## **SPACE PRESERVATION AND DEPARTMENT OF PEACE**

WHEREAS, the community of nations voted in 1967 to keep space free of weapons,

WHEREAS, the Bush Administration has terminated the 1972 Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia (USSR) and has shaped a new Nuclear Treaty with Russia so as not to destroy nuclear weapons but to store them in stockpile,

WHEREAS, the Bush Administration is actively moving forward to create the Master of Space military program

called the National Missile Defense (NMD),

THEREFORE, Veterans For Peace urges its members to support actively HR2459, The Department of Peace, sponsored by Representative Dennis Kucinich (D, OH). This bill, submitted in July 2001 with forty-three co-sponsors was sent to and still sits in committee. It can be found on [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov)

### **SOA/WHISC RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the School of Americas Watch (SOAW) has effectively portrayed the US Army's School of the Americas/ Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation as a US terrorist training camp both directly and indirectly responsible for the death and oppression of hundreds of thousands of the Latin American people through its operation at Ft. Benning, GA;

WHEREAS, SOAW has persevered in monitoring the actions of SOA/WHISC graduates and determined that their behavior remains criminal and oppressive;

WHEREAS, the United States government, through the SOA/WHISC remains intent on dominating the governments of Latin America, as witnessed by the recent coup attempt in Venezuela which involved SOA/WHISC graduates, thus demonstrating that SOA/WHISC remains a terrorist training camp still needing to be closed;

THEREFORE Be It Resolved-that Veterans For Peace endorses the September 23 - 25 drop of "The New Patriots" video and "Warriors to Resisters" booklet at all Congressional offices in "Washington DC in our continued support for House Resolution 1810 - a bill to cut funding for the SOA/WHISC, and appeals to its members to urge our representatives to co-sponsor.

Be it further resolved that Veterans For Peace endorses the annual SOAW demonstration at the gate of Fort Benning on November 15 to 17, 2002 calling for the School to be closed and encourages its members to attend in mass.

### **RESOLUTION ONANTIPERSONNEL LANDMINES**

WHEREAS, antipersonnel landmines are a weapon of indiscriminate terror in violation of international humanitarian law, inflicting horrible injuries on civilians and soldiers alike, not only during war but also in peacetime;

WHEREAS, antipersonnel landmines are also a weapon of mass destruction in slow motion, killing or wounding some 20,000 people around the world each year;

WHEREAS, 143 nations have already signed the Ottawa Ban Landmines Treaty banning use of antipersonnel landmines, and that Treaty went into effect on March 1, 1999; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. government has so far refused to join the Treaty, even though it is the only remaining superpower with the most advanced weapons;

NOW, THEREFORE, Veterans for Peace (VFP), meeting at its national convention in Duluth, Minnesota, August 17, 2002,

1) Calls upon our government to join the Ottawa Ban Landmines Treaty at once, without further delay or excuse;

2) Calls upon our government to remove and destroy all antipersonnel landmines planted or in stockpile at home or abroad; and

3) Urges the Congress to pass a bill outlawing all U.S. production, stockpiling or use of antipersonnel landmines.

### **PAYMENT OF UNITED NATIONS DUES**

WHEREAS, the Untied States has long been in arrears in payment of its assessed contributions to the Untied Nations, and

WHEREAS, the United States General Accounting Office has as early as June, 1998 shown (see "United Nations Financial Issues and U.S. Arrears"

[GAO/Nsias-98-201BR]) that such payment arrears has been a primary cause for losing seats on important committees of the United Nations, caused a loss of Assembly votes, caused administrative initiatives to be diverted, undermined the United Nation's valuable work, soured relations with other nations and reduced respect for the rule of law in international affairs,

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Veterans For Peace urge the Congress of the United States to take action immediately to pay all debts in arrears to the United Nations.

### **RESOLUTION ON INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING**

WHEREAS, corporate abuse of power is a root cause of many of our economic, political and environmental problems, and

WHEREAS, corporate abuse of power has severely compromised both our democracy and our sovereignty as a nation state, and

WHEREAS; corporate abuse of power has subverted our free market economic system, and

WHEREAS, the current electoral system of the US does not allow the citizenry to express its preferences adequately,

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the members of Veterans For Peace, at their convention August 17, 2002 call upon the Congress of the US to enact a bill mandating an instant runoff voting system for all Federal elections.



If you believe the Voices of Veterans need to be heard ...  
If you believe we must become a more effective advocate for Peace ...  
Then, once again, you are asked to

## PAY THE PRICE OF PEACE

Please dig deeply and contribute as much as you can to support  
Veterans For Peace.

(Our fiscal year runs from September 1 to August 31. This means that most of you receiving this report are now being asked to pay dues for fiscal year 2003. Those of you who have already paid for 2003 have membership cards so stating. The rest of you will receive new cards, with our profound "thanks". An envelope is provided for your dues.)



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