



## 2015 Position Statements

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### **Veterans For Peace Statement on the Murders at Chapel Hill**

*Date: 2/20/15*

Veterans For Peace deeply regrets the murders Monday, Feb 13th of three young Muslim students in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Growing anti-Muslim sentiment and hate crimes in the U.S. mirror the U.S. war on Muslim countries, and are stirred up by violent anti-Muslim propaganda such as the film, American Sniper.

We send our condolences to the families and friends of these beautiful young people, whose lives were robbed of them at such a young age.

We encourage all VFP members to challenge anti-Muslim racism and violence. Please read the reflection by Rabia Chaudry, below.

With three murders in Chapel Hill, American Must Confront Anti-Muslim Rhetoric by Rabia Chaudry:

<http://observer.com/2015/02/with-three-murders-in-chapel-hill-america-must-confront-anti-muslim-rhetoric/>

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## **Veterans For Peace Congratulates the Diplomats of Iran**

*Date: 4/3/15*

Veterans For Peace congratulates the diplomats of Iran, U.S.A., Russia, France, Britain and Germany for developing a framework for an international agreement to resolve tensions around Iran's nuclear power program. While there are many details yet to be determined, these negotiations took a significant step forward towards a peaceful resolution of differences.

Today, Veterans For Peace calls on the people of the United States and particularly the U.S. Congress to support the Obama Administration's and international community's efforts to continue down the road of diplomacy as they work to develop a comprehensive plan of action within the agreed framework. Veterans For Peace cautions those in Congress who over the past few months have tried to scuttle negotiations. Do not work against peace. You must find ways to be helpful in working for diplomatic solutions. A peaceful resolution to this disagreement will help both the U.S. and Iranian people. There is no need for war. War would be a choice, not a necessity. After more than a decade of endless U.S. wars, advocating a new war and blocking avenues of diplomacy is irresponsible and highly detrimental to the future of the U.S. Blocking this agreement will harm international relationships and U.S. service members who have carried a heavy burden and cannot bear the weight of more war piled on their backs.

We ask the people of the United States to look to the happiness expressed in Iran at the prospect of a real agreement in contrast to the most of our nation carrying on business as usual. Why is this? Iran has been profoundly affected by the actions of our nation, and not only by economic sanctions recently imposed because of U.S. belief Iran intends to develop a nuclear weapon. The U.S. has meddled in Iranian internal politics for decades, including the U.S. instigated 1953 coup that removed the democratically elected Iranian Premier Mohammad Mosaddegh and installed the regime of the Shah of Iran. The taking of U.S. hostages during the 1979 Revolution was a direct result of U.S. manipulation in the Iranian political process. Yet the people of Iran have never shown animosity towards the people of the U.S. The slogans we hear played over and over on the news are aimed at the U.S. government, not the people. This agreement is seen as an important step towards rebuilding the relationship between the U.S. and Iran. Do not let politicians stand in the way of Iranians and the people of the U.S. learning and sharing with each other. Peace is built between people. Let us as the people of the U.S. take the next steps in building the peace between our two nations.

[Call your congressional delegation](#) and tell them to support current efforts at diplomacy and peace with Iran.

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## **Veterans For Peace Calls for an End to the Persecution of Bowe Bergdahl**

*Date: 4/6/15*

*The Army has charged Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl with desertion and misbehavior before the enemy, officials announced Wednesday. Bergdahl, who spent five years as a captive under the Taliban before he was freed in a May 31 prisoner swap, will face an Article 32 preliminary hearing, said Col. Daniel King, a spokesman for Army Forces Command. [\[from Army Times\]](#)*

**Veterans For Peace calls for an end to the persecution of Bowe Bergdahl**, who has become a scapegoat for the failed policy of massive U.S. intervention in Afghanistan. We are concerned that President Obama is again delaying the long-promised withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan, a U.S. war now in its 14th year.

As long as U.S. troops remain in Afghanistan, they will be involved in killing innocent men, women and children. Neither Bowe Bergdahl nor any U.S. soldier should have their health and moral well-being put at risk in an illegal and unwinnable war. Those soldiers who resist illegal wars and refuse to participate in war crimes will continue to have our full support.

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## **Veterans Group Calls for the Immediate Withdrawal of the Maryland National Guard from Baltimore**

*Date: 4/28/15*

**St. Louis, MO.** Veterans For Peace would like to extend our condolences to the family of Freddie Gray, the 25-year-old Black man who died in police custody from a fatal spinal cord injury. The loss of a child under any circumstance is tragic. However, losing a child to violence adds a deeper pain.

Veterans For Peace stands with the family and the people of Baltimore in their call for peace and non-violent change. As veterans who know war and the horror it brings, we know that violence only serves to cause more violence. Those who are most vulnerable are caught in the crossfire of violence, disrupting lives and destroying families. Violence is like a virus that escalates and spreads. It can easily spiral out of control into a dark morass of death. Knowing this, because we have participated in it, we call on all parties to take a step back and search for non-violent means to address the tensions in Baltimore and around the nation.

Veterans For Peace calls for the immediate withdrawal of the Maryland National Guard. We are appalled to see military weapons, vehicles and equipment once again deployed in U.S. cities to control U.S. citizens who are in fact reacting to a long history of state sanctioned violence and appalling economic and social conditions. Conditions that give them little hope of providing for themselves and their families. We are highly concerned as we approach the 45th anniversary of Kent State this May 4th and Jackson State this May 15th, that we will see another example of nervous and fearful National Guard troops shoot and possibly kill people in the streets of this nation.

With our call for peace and as an organization waging peace, we must also seek justice. Those most responsible for the rebellions in Baltimore and Ferguson are not the disenfranchised and the victims of police violence. Those most responsible are the economic and political leaders who do not address the chronic economic and social instability of neighborhoods like that of Freddie Gray's. One only has to drive through Baltimore neighborhoods like his to see and understand the frustration of residents. But the numbers also speak for themselves; unemployment 16-64 years old - 51.8%, population 25 and older with less than a high school diploma - 60.7%, vacant or abandon building - 33.1% and 9th-12th graders chronically absent from school - 49.3%.

Under these conditions there are few possibilities other than street violence and confrontations with police. The truth is that police are like soldiers, working class people who are manipulated and used by the same economic and political interests who gain the most from the neglect of these neighborhoods. Mirroring working class soldiers who are sent to foreign lands to impose U.S. ruling class interests on the poor of the world, the police are sent to control poor populations ere at home who have legitimate complaints and grievances but have been ignored for decades. In both cases, the police and soldiers' sense of wanting to do the right thing and serve people and country are exploited for greed and profit. Two-time Medal of Honor winner and highly respected Marine Corps General Smedley Butler said it best, "I served in all commissioned ranks from a second Lieutenant to a Major General. And during that time, I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for

Wall Street, and for the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer for capitalism.” In cases like Ferguson and Baltimore, the police are tools for the same interests.

President Obama and many others have called for the end to violence in response to police brutality. We agree, but we must also remind the President and others that today just as in 1968 as stated by Dr. King, “I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today: my own government. For the sake of those boys, for the sake of this government, for the sake of the hundreds of thousands trembling under our violence, I cannot be silent.” Veterans For Peace can cannot be silent.

We call on our nation to hold police accountable for lawless violence against communities, and we call on the rich and powerful to end global wars, to end their indifference and pursuit of profit over humanity and to use the trillions devoted to Pentagon war spending to invest in human needs around the world. The quickest path to end violence is to provide a path to a bright future. Education, jobs and opportunity will lead to stable families and prosperity. If we continue to ignore the cries of the global poor and disenfranchised, we will continue to see violent reaction and the spread of organizations like ISIL. People rise up because they must, not because they want to. They have no choice. They will use whatever means is at their disposal.

Veterans For Peace will continue to use nonviolent means, including direct action and civil disobedience to push for the change we seek. We call on all peacemakers and justice seekers to join together to bring into fruition a system that places humanity and human needs over profit. That is what we need and what we must build if we want to end the violence sweeping the world.

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## **Veterans Call for Halt to Illegal Cluster Bomb Shipments**

*Date: 5/12/15*

### **HRW: Saudi Arabia Dropping U.S. Cluster Bombs on Yemen**

Veterans For Peace is calling on the Obama administration to discontinue the delivery of illegal cluster bombs to Saudi Arabia. [Human Rights Watch provided convincing evidence](#) this week that Saudi Arabia is dropping U.S. made cluster bombs in its aerial campaign against neighboring Yemen.

In 2008, 116 countries signed the [Convention on Cluster Bombs](#), agreeing not to manufacture or use cluster bombs. Cluster bombs contain many small bomblets that disperse over a wide area, killing and maiming civilians, including many children. The U.S. and Saudi Arabia did not sign the Cluster Bomb Treaty.

“Why is our government supporting Saudi Arabia’s bombing campaign in Yemen?” asked Barry Ladendorf, national president of Veterans For Peace. “Why are we supplying Saudi Arabia with weapons so reprehensible they have been rejected by the international community?”

Because many of these bomblets fail to explode on contact with the ground they remain a hazard, especially to children, for many years, as we have seen in Vietnam and Laos, where cluster bombs dropped by the U.S. over 40 years ago continue to kill and maim hundreds of civilians annually. Members of Veterans For Peace are working with [Project Renew](#) to remove and reduce the risks of unexploded ordnance in Vietnam.

“It’s high time that the U.S. signed on to the Convention on Cluster Bombs,” said Veterans For Peace president Barry Ladendorf. “The American people do not want to be responsible for killing children around the world for decades to come.”

[Costa Rica, a signatory to the Convention on Cluster Bombs, has also condemned](#) Saudi Arabia’s dropping U.S. made cluster bombs on Yemen.

Responding to the Human Rights Watch Report, a Defense Department official said, “We take all accounts of civilian deaths due to the ongoing hostilities in Yemen very seriously. We are looking carefully into the details surrounding this HRW report.”

Veterans For Peace is urging its members and supporters to call on the Obama administration to immediately stop delivery of cluster bombs to Saudi Arabia, and to sign the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

For further information on how to get involved in the movement to end cluster bombs, contact the [Cluster Munition Coalition](#).

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## **Veterans Call For Diplomacy in Iraq, Not More U.S. Bases and Troops**

*Date: 6/12/15*

### **Veterans For Peace Proposes Concrete Steps for Diplomatic Solution to Middle East Wars**

Veterans For Peace is dismayed by news that the Obama administration is sending 450 more troops to Iraq and is considering building additional U.S. bases in the war-torn country.

**We remind President Obama of his own words**, as reported by many news outlets in August 2014:

***"There is no American military solution to the larger crisis in Iraq... The only lasting solution is for Iraqis to come together and form an inclusive government."***

Veterans For Peace calls on the President to bring all the troops home now and to use diplomacy instead of more violence to address the fighting in Iraq and Syria.

*"Last summer it seems the President understood that the future of Iraq is in the hands of the people in the region,"* said Michael McPhearson, Executive Director of Veterans For Peace. "Has that changed in less than a year? The answer is NO."

### **Veterans For Peace has issued the following analysis, which includes concrete steps that can be taken to end the violence in Iraq, Syria, and throughout the Middle East.**

The 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, followed by eight years of military occupation, is the primary reason Iraq is in shambles in the first place. ISIL would not even exist if the U.S. had not invaded Iraq. Continuing military intervention will only serve to worsen an already dire situation.

The U.S. already has 3,000 so-called "advisors" on the ground in Iraq. These troops, combined with U.S. weaponry and air power, have not kept ISIL at bay. In fact, ISIL has grown and expanded during the last year.

The central government of Iraq has not been able to inspire the people of Iraq to come together against ISIL. It is unlikely that additional U.S. personnel on the ground will motivate positive change for the people of Iraq.

The 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq set into motion a decade of violent resistance. Violence has become the norm as the answer to political differences. ISIL thrives on violence and death, while using anti-West propaganda as a means to recruit and unify its followers. More violence and death from the U.S. will not diminish ISIL. It is more likely to change the tactical situation for the worse, as ISIL will advertise that the U.S. is sending more troops to fight them and that they – ISIL – will soon be in combat against the U.S. The U.S. is playing into the narrative ISIL uses to recruit.

In the year of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War, one would think the U.S. government would have learned by now that U.S. military power cannot bring to closure issues that call for political solutions. In Vietnam, advisors eventually swelled to more troops and direct combat. The central government could not motivate the common people of

Vietnam to stand with it. The U.S. stayed in Vietnam to save face, resulting in the unnecessary death of millions of Vietnamese and 58,000 U.S. soldiers. In the end, U.S. military power was not the answer to a lasting peace. The people of Vietnam had to find that between themselves. The U.S. faces a similar situation in both Iraq and Afghanistan. While the U.S. should not be a prisoner of the past, it is foolish not to learn from it.

**Solutions to the situation in Iraq are not simple, but there are ways to address this challenge that do not include U.S. military action:**

1. **Stop the airstrikes.** The Sunni leaders and militia, who President Obama acknowledges must be persuaded to break with ISIL, see the U.S. as acting as the air force for the Kurds and Shia against Sunnis. The driving force for the Sunni-ISIL alliance is the alienation of Sunnis from Baghdad by the recent U.S.-backed Iraqi governments. Bombing Sunnis will not help to mend this relationship.
  2. **Stop sending troops to Iraq** and stop sending more weapons that fuel the conflict killing more civilians and ignoring human rights violations committed by “allies.” This includes pressuring countries to stop supporting and selling arms to ISIL and stopping all black-market weapons sales.
  3. **Make diplomacy the number one priority.** Since it is clear there is no military solution, the U.S. must seriously engage with everyone in the region, including Iran, who is needed to force the Iraqi government to be more inclusive with Sunni leaders. Without an inclusive government in Iraq there is no way to effectively confront ISIL.
  4. **Initiate new diplomatic efforts in the United Nations.** Use diplomatic and financial pressure to stop countries from financing and arming ISIL and other fighters in Syria. An arms embargo on all sides should be on the long-term agenda.
  5. **Restart UN negotiations to end the civil war in Syria.** Set aside preconceived demands and work to end the violence. Once that is achieved the people of Syria can begin to chart their destiny.
  6. **Massively increase humanitarian efforts** through the UN and any other means. Real and effective efforts to relieve the suffering of hundreds of thousands of refugees from war will go a long way in convincing people to break with ISIL. More U.S. bombings and killings will only confirm that the U.S. is the enemy of Islam.
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## **Veterans For Peace Stands with the People of Charleston**

*Date: 6/19/15*

**The Executive Committee of Veterans For Peace is asking VFP chapters throughout the U.S. to approach Black churches, civil rights or community organizations in your area with messages expressing your condolences, your sympathy and your solidarity. For example, you may want to deliver flowers and a card to Black churches this Sunday.**

### **WE WILL RESIST RACIST VIOLENCE AT HOME AND ABROAD**

Veterans For Peace is appalled by the racist killing of nine members of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. We extend our deepest sympathies to their families, to the members of the AME Church, and to the community of Charleston. We understand that this ugly, terrorist act is causing people deep pain throughout the United States and around the world. We wish to stand in solidarity with the African-American community in the coming days and months, while addressing the root causes of this horrible hate crime.

It is no accident that this racist, terrorist action took place in a historic Black church founded by former slaves in a state that still flies the Confederate flag at the statehouse. This reverence by leaders in the highest levels of South Carolina government for a time now gone when the Confederate flag flew proudly over a nation of slave states, is a clear invitation for some to dream of returning to the days of official segregation. The shooter was one of those people — a young white man who proudly sported flags of apartheid South Africa and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). His intention, according to his friends, was to restart the Civil War and to return to white rule in the U.S.

### **Racism and War Are Two of the Triple Evils**

There is a connection between increasing racist violence in the United States and the massive indiscriminate killing of hundreds of thousands of people in other lands. Growing racism against black, brown and Muslim people in the United States is a reflection of the racism that justifies killing non-white people abroad. The U.S. military deliberately uses racism to motivate young men and women to kill.

President Obama says that the problem is that we need gun control in the United States. He says no other developed country faces an epidemic of mass murders. But calls for gun control only serve to distract from the root causes for the June 17<sup>th</sup> tragedy; racism/hate and the belief that violence is a just means to address conflict. Obama himself pulls the trigger on a daily basis, with drone strikes in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia, strikes that have killed hundreds if not thousands of civilians.

As U.S. military veterans, we understand that we will not be able to end war and militarism unless we confront racist violence here at home. Racism and war are two of the triple evils Dr. King called on all of us to confront to work for peace and justice. All three; racism, war and poverty must be defeated if we are to achieve a nonviolent world based on peace, understanding and equality for all.

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## **Veterans For Peace Issues Transgender Statement**

*Date: 7/9/15*

Veterans For Peace does not tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status or sexual orientation, in any of its activities or operations.

VFP affirms the rights, humanity and identity of trans and gender diverse people and will not accept trans-phobic behavior or remarks.

VFP will take the following affirmative steps to address all forms of discrimination including discrimination against transgender and gender diverse people.

1. Veterans For Peace will hold a workshop during the 2015 convention on transgender issues.
  2. Veterans For Peace is developing protocols to address membership and staff complaints of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status or sexual orientation.
  3. The Veterans For Peace Board will introduce a national VFP resolution calling for Equality for all transgender veterans and active duty military as well as a call for Equality for all transgender people in all aspects of society.
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## **Veterans For Peace Applauds Iran Deal**

*Date: 7/16/15*

Veterans For Peace applauds the work of six world powers - P5+1 (U.S., U.K., France, Russia, China and Germany) and Iran in reaching an agreement concerning Iran's nuclear program. It is in the best interest of the world to reach a non-violent agreement rather than going down a track of possible war.

We call on Congress to support the agreement, paving the way for better relations between the U.S. and Iran; allowing the two nations to work together in addressing the ever-growing humanitarian crisis in Syria, Iraq and across the region.

It is important to understand that it has never been confirmed that Iran has the intention to build a nuclear weapon or has a formal nuclear weapons program. Iran does have a civilian nuclear power program that the agreement seeks to limit the possibility of being converted to a nuclear weapons program.

ABC news reports that "Iran has agreed to significantly reduce its stockpile of enriched nuclear material and cease further enrichment, effectively extending the time it would take Iran to build a bomb from a few months to one year, over to 10 years. Upon verification that Iran is keeping its commitments to dismantle much of its nuclear program, major economic sanctions will be lifted, effectively releasing more than \$100 billion in frozen Iranian assets." Iran bent over backwards by agreeing to an extensive verification regime, which is a major intrusion on their national sovereignty, in order to ensure the world is comfortable that they are living up to the agreement. We call on the U.S. government to equally live up to its part of the agreement, especially the lifting of all sanctions against Iran.

Unfortunately, there are many in the U.S. Congress who do not want to see any agreement succeed that does not totally humiliate Iran or lead to war. They claim the U.S. and the other 5 governments gave up too much in the negotiations to get the deal. Following the lead of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, these U.S. politicians are prepared to scuttle the agreement at all cost. This type of thinking can lead to nowhere but war. There cannot be successful negotiations based on the humiliation or total capitulation of the opposing party. The people of Iran have a long and proud history. This agreement, which in time lifts sanctions, must be equitable to all parties for it to be accepted.

Fortunately for the world, the agreement with Iran has the possibility of opening new doors of diplomacy and pursuit of common interests. It will bring economic relief to the people of Iran and has the potential to help calm tensions rather than escalate violence in a region that already sees daily atrocities. We as Veterans For Peace say to the people of the United States, we must not let a short-sighted Congress short circuit the possibility of a brighter future for peace in the Middle East and across the region.

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## **Veterans For Peace Applauds South Carolina for Removing the Confederate Flag**

*Date: 7/17/15*

Veterans For Peace (VFP), an international veteran's organization, applauds the state government of South Carolina for removing the Confederate Battle Flag from the state Capitol grounds. We appreciate the government of South Carolina taking this stand to place this flag in its rightful place (a museum where it can resume its appropriate part of 19th century history). After being furled at Appomattox, VA in April 1865, the flag was unfurled in 1961 on the state capitol of South Carolina to mark the 100th anniversary of the Civil War and in 1962 was legislatively mandated to stay in response to the Civil Rights movement. For more than fifty years, African-American taxpayers in South Carolina had to witness and pay for that symbol of hatred on public property. As South Carolina Governor Haley said, "That flag is part of our past, not our future."

However, the "battle" is not over. The Confederate Battle Flag is being flown by private citizens throughout the south. VFP does not advocate taking first amendment rights away from anyone, but many Americans perceive that flag as a symbol of treason and hate. This sentiment is not restricted to the African-American community.

Recently, the US Supreme Court ruled that the state of Texas had the right to deny Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) specialty plates which included the image of the Confederate Battle Flag. Veterans For Peace supports this Supreme Court decision and strongly urges the nine states who currently have SCV specialty plates that still includes the image of the Confederate Battle Flag to repeal these laws.

Veterans For Peace also encourages the state of Mississippi to change its state flag which currently incorporates the Confederate Battle Flag into the design.

As an international veteran's organization, we support and encourage the removal of the image of the Confederate Battle Flag from any state, county, municipal, and federal sponsored feature or event. This would not include displays in museums or the temporary display during re-enactments or other educational events.

Veterans For Peace believes and encourages that the Confederate Battle Flag should not have official federal, state or municipal presence outside of a museum or other educational site.

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## **Veterans For Peace Calls upon U.S. to Reduce Military Tensions in Korea**

*Date: 8/25/15*

Veterans For Peace, a major peace organization of veterans in the U.S., welcomed the announcement on Tuesday, August 25th, of an inter-Korean agreement to de-escalate the current military tensions in Korea.

Among the items agreed to, the South agreed to stop its anti-North propaganda broadcasts in the DMZ, while the North agreed to end its "semi-state of war." They also agreed to hold a government-to-government talk in Seoul or Pyongyang in the near future, to improve the South-North relations.

This is a good step toward easing the high military tensions at the heavily armed DMZ area. We wish them further success from the future talks, including an agreement to join the Mine Ban Treaty together to avoid further casualties from the antipersonnel landmine danger in Korea.

At the same time, we recognize that the U.S. is a key player in Korea, and urge the Obama administration to take its own steps to reduce the high military tensions in Korea, such as ending the ongoing joint war drills with South Korea, involving some 50,000 South Korean troops and 30,000 U.S. troops, which clearly pose security threats to North Korea. Such drills usually force North Korea to mobilize its troops for defense, raising military tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

In reviewing the recent incidents that happened in Korea, we are very concerned that the U.S. and ROK (South Korea) may have been provoking the DPRK (North Korea) government, with various accusations against the North, without any clear evidence.

For an example, on Aug. 4, 2015, there were three antipersonnel landmine explosions, injuring two ROK soldiers, inside the southern sector of the DMZ, which is controlled by the U.S. and ROK. In the hours after the blasts, the ROK officials told the media initially that "there was no possibility of North Korean involvement," blaming the explosions on the heavy rains that moved the landmines. This kind of accidents happened before in the DMZ. However, on Aug. 10, the USFK Command issued a press release, which blamed North Korea for planting its landmines "along a known ROK patrol route in the southern half of the DMZ." North Korea has denied the charge as "a ridiculous farce." If it was meant for a secret operation, why would the North use its own landmines, instead of using U.S.-made landmines?

A member of VFP-Korea Peace Campaign project, Michael Bassett, Staff Sergeant (ret.), comments on the incident as follows: "Having patrolled those same trails for years as a recon team leader, I find it impossible to believe that KPA (North Korean) soldiers could walk 450 meters south across the military demarcation fence with AP mines in hand, and not get blown up or captured on camera."

Thus, we urge all VFP members and American people to remain skeptical about the mainstream media's reports on Korea and to call on the White House and Congress to take steps to reduce military tensions in Korea, including entering talks with North Korea, and to

support H. Res. 384, which is co-sponsored by three remaining veterans of the Korean War in the Congress, calling for a formal end to the Korean War.

War is not the solution; ending the lingering Korean War with a peace treaty is the right answer.

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## **Veterans For Peace Works Towards Dignity for All by Partnering for Peace**

*Date: 9/17/15*

The General Assembly of the United Nations has declared the 21st of September as an International Day of Peace. This day is devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples. The theme of this year's commemoration is "Partnerships for Peace – Dignity for All" which recognizes the importance of all segments of society to work together to strive for peace.

As military veterans we have made waging peace, our primary mission since 1985. Veterans For Peace recognizes that continued conflict in our communities and around the world serve no one except the military masters and war profiteers. Armed conflict only leads to increased suffering, devastation, injuries and death for those impacted by war making.

As veterans we have served our country and now believe we have a greater service to our communities and global neighbors by proclaiming and demonstrating a higher responsibility towards ending conflict and global crisis through a culture that recognizes the dignity of all people.

To that end, we call upon our members, fellow veterans, supporters and greater communities to move beyond talk of ending conflict, and instead adopt and implement practices that embody peace at home and abroad. We cannot remain passive while powers seek to oppress others through violence or the threat of violence.

As Veterans For Peace we urge communities, governments, schools, places of worship and individuals throughout the world to partner with one another in commemorating this International Day of Peace and work together towards establishing a world that celebrates not only a day of peace, but rather a life of peace and a world free of conflict.

#PeaceDay  
#VeteransForPeace  
#DignityForAll

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# **Veterans Organization Denounces U.S. Bombing of Afghan Hospital**

*Date: 10/7/2015*

## **Calls for End to U.S. Led War in Afghanistan**

Veterans For Peace condemns the U.S. bombing of the Doctors Without Borders hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan. The sustained attack by one or more U.S. fighter jets left 22 people dead, including staff members, patients and children, and caused great destruction to the hospital.

A U.S. military spokesperson in Afghanistan has referred to the attack as “collateral damage,” but eyewitness accounts and Afghan military sources indicate the hospital was attacked deliberately, on the pretext that members of the Taliban were treated there.

If the attack was indeed deliberate, then it is a very serious war crime. We support Doctors Without Borders’ call for an independent investigation. We have seen what happens when the Pentagon is allowed to investigate itself. It is high time that the U.S. military be held accountable for the deaths of innocent civilians. **We call for all involved, up to the highest level, to be held accountable.**

**Veterans For Peace also calls for the end of the U.S. led war in Afghanistan and all military personnel brought home.** This latest tragedy is not the first U.S. incident in Afghanistan that may be considered a war crime. The U.S. invasion and occupation that began fourteen-years ago today, has done no favors for the Afghan people. There have been countless incidents where wedding parties, for example, have become “collateral damage.” Whether by careless mistakes or ruthless deliberate targeting, many thousands of Afghani civilians have been killed. According to a report from the Watson Institute For International Studies at Brown University, 311,000 people — dead and seriously wounded — have become casualties in the interrelated war zones of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Most are combatants, but 117,000 of these casualties are civilians. And though it is extremely hard to document, it is estimated that an additional 360,000 people have died in Afghanistan from the negative effects of war, for example, on public health infrastructure and as a consequence of displacement and malnutrition.

How many incidents of civilian deaths does it take before it is clear that loss of civilian lives and the manner by which they die is unacceptable? Is it realistic to think that after fourteen years of war the feeling of fear and terror brought by U.S. bombs is less than that brought by Taliban fighters? Would we accept this kind of collateral damage or indirect deaths from war on U.S. citizens, or would we try a different way? Are Afghans lives worth less than American lives?

The people of Afghanistan, which include the Taliban, must work out their differences. While it is true that the Taliban does not adhere to international human rights standards, it is also true, as revealed by Amnesty International and news reports, the U.S. and its coalition partners constantly commit human rights violations for which there is little accountability. The U.S. cannot legitimately call for protection of human rights while at the same time violating human rights.



**It is time to take a different approach to the conflict in Afghanistan.** Fourteen years of war has not brought peace. After more than a decade of funding to the Afghan government and the deaths of U.S. and NATO troops, Taliban fighters and civilians, the only reason the Afghan government remains in power is because of U.S. presence. The U.S., a foreign power is deciding who should lead in Afghanistan. That is not freedom. That is not self-government. President Obama must finally end the war in Afghanistan. The people of Afghanistan must form their own union. The international community must pressure the Afghan government, Taliban dominated or not, to follow international law and respect human rights. A real diplomatic effort must be brought to bear to end the violence so that the people of Afghanistan can rebuild civil society and create space for human rights activists to struggle for a just society. This cannot happen at all in a war zone. It will be a hard and long road to walk, but the road of war has been tried and has proven to only lead to more war and death, not peace and security. It is time for a radical shift in policy, not to recommit to more of the same. **The U.S. must end the war and occupation and bring our troops home now.**

- [22 People Killed by U.S. Airstrike on Doctors Without Borders Hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan](#)
- [VP Gerry Condon Comments About the Recent Hospital Attack in Kunduz, Afghanistan](#)
- [Killing Blind](#) by Kathy Kelly
- [VFP Letter of Support to Doctors Without Borders](#)
- [Innocents Not 'Collateral Damage'](#) by Louis Pumphrey
- [6 Reasons for an Independent Investigation into MSF Kunduz Hospital Bombing](#)

**More:**

[Amnesty Report](#)

[Washington Post news article](#)

[Watson Institute For International Studies at Brown University](#)

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## **Veterans Group Calls On U.S. Public to Say No to More War**

*Date: 10/15/15*

President Obama's decision to prolong the U.S. led war in Afghanistan only ensures U.S. responsibility for more death and destruction. Veterans For Peace condemns the decision and calls on the U.S. public to say no to more war.

Today, President Obama commented, "I do not support the idea of endless war, and I have repeatedly argued against marching into open-ended military conflicts that do not serve our core security interests." But Veterans For Peace asks, what is this policy but endless war? The U.S. has been fighting in Afghanistan for over fourteen years. What can fewer than 10,000 service members do that more than 100,000 could not? Al-Qaeda is a non-factor in Afghanistan and the Taliban are Afghans. U.S. presence in Afghanistan ensures more Afghan deaths and delay in reduction of violence so that civil society can be rebuilt and peace and justice can begin to take hold. War, Mr. President, has not worked. If you don't believe in endless wars and you want to be a true Nobel Peace laureate to be looked up to and admired for working for peace in the face of pressure to continue down the road of war, Bring Our Troops Home and put all of the weight and power of the U.S. behind building peace.

In his remarks, the president referred to the Taliban and the people of Afghanistan as if they are two different groups. The truth is that the Taliban represent a portion of the Afghan people. The Taliban are Pashtun tribesmen. Pashtuns are also the majority in Afghanistan. This makes it very difficult to combat the Taliban as they have many sympathizers and supporters who may not actively fight the U.S. backed government, but will not support it. It is clear that U.S. led efforts in Afghanistan have given more people reason to join the Taliban. A Carnegie Endowment for International Peace [2009 question and answer](#) piece explained, people... "join because the Afghan government is unjust, corrupt, or simply not there. They also join because the Americans have bombed their houses or shown disrespect for their values. For young people, joining the Taliban is a way to earn social status."

That was written six years past, and little has changed. Just two weeks ago on October 3, 2015 the U.S. bombed a Doctors Without Borders Hospital in Kunduz Afghanistan killing twelve medical staff, ten patients and wounding thirty-two others. This type of incident is not uncommon. Amnesty International's [2014/15 Annual Afghanistan Report](#) says, "ISAF and NATO forces continued to launch night raids and aerial and ground attacks, claiming dozens of civilian lives, despite completing the handover of responsibility for security to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in June 2013."

The report goes on to say. "There were significant failures of accountability for civilian deaths, including a lack of transparent investigations and a lack of justice for the victims and their families." An October 14<sup>th</sup> [New York Times article](#) reports that, "Mr. Ghani is not popular among Afghans. And the problems in his government — like corruption and incompetence — run so deep that fixing them will take years, possibly decades." Trust of the Afghan government has not increased among the people it claims to represent.

It is true that anti-government forces are responsible for the vast majority of civilian deaths. However, continuing the war does not increase the possibility for reduction of violence to save lives. This makes coalition forces and the opposition complicit in every death. There is little chance of defeating the Taliban because they will not stop fighting until the foreign invaders are gone and there are not enough Afghans willing to possibly die in support of the U.S. backed national government.

There is not a perfect solution to the tragedy of Afghanistan. War has been the norm for the people of Afghanistan for nearly 37 years. The answer to ending the violence there is political, not military. The U.S. must withdraw and give the nation of Afghanistan back to the people of Afghanistan. The people of Afghanistan must form their own union. One we may not like, but is theirs. The international community must pressure the Afghan government, Taliban dominated or not, to follow international law and respect human rights. A real diplomatic effort must be brought to bear to end the violence so that the people of Afghanistan can rebuild civil society and create space for human rights activists to struggle for a just society.

Concerns about the threat of ISIL in Afghanistan must be met with more effective efforts to end the violence and wars in Iraq and Syria. U.S. global policy of endless war is merging into a global response of violence. We need a global response that meets human needs and aspirations. War is not the foundation on which to build peace. U.S. efforts have proven that war is the breeding ground for more violence and hatred. We demand a peace plan, Mr. President. We are not war weary, we simply know it does not work.

Finally, there are U.S. service members and families upon whose shoulders this failed and derived policy of endless war will continue to fall. U.S. military personnel have sacrificed enough in blood on the battlefield; wounded and killed. They are burdened with executing a no win strategy. When they come home they face unemployment, homelessness, recovery from physical and mental wounds and high rates of death by suicide. The Department of Veterans Affairs is already overwhelmed, unable to meet the needs of our brother and sister veterans. This policy ensures more of the same on the home front as well. Mr. President, it is clearly time to end this and all U.S. wars.

Bring Them Home and Take Care of Them When They Get Here.

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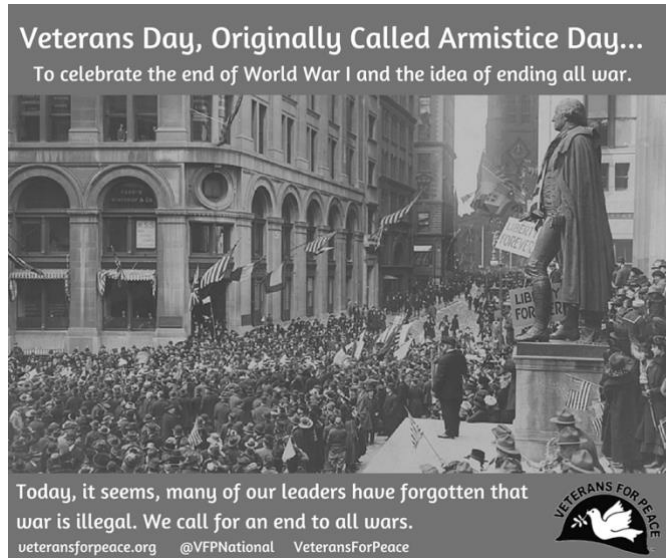
## Stand with Veterans For Peace on November 11

Date: 11/3/15

**Veterans For Peace is calling on all our members to take a stand for peace this Armistice Day. We are calling on all our friends and allies to join us at the barricades of peace on November 11.**

Over the last several years, Veterans For Peace chapters have taken the lead in celebrating Armistice Day on November 11. We are reclaiming the original intention of that day – a worldwide call for peace that was spurred by universal revulsion at the huge slaughter of World War One. In Canada and the United Kingdom, this day is known as Remembrance Day.

After World War II, the U.S. Congress decided to re-brand November 11 as Veterans Day. Who could speak against that? But honoring the warrior quickly morphed into honoring the military and glorifying war. Armistice Day was flipped from a day for peace into a day for displays of militarism.



This November 11, it is as urgent as ever to ring the bells for peace. Many Veterans For Peace chapters ring bells, and ask local churches to do the same, at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, as was done at the end of World War One.

[Visit the Armistice Day page for ways to get involved.](#)

**There are so many reasons we must press our government to end reckless military interventions that endanger the entire world.**

- In Syria, the U.S. has armed and supported rebels who share its goal of overthrowing the Assad government. U.S. intervention in Syria has been a major factor in the ongoing tragedy that has made refugees of half of all Syrians and has done irreparable destruction to the nation of Syria. The U.S. government and military must end its support of the rebels and abandon its efforts at regime change. It must join in sincere diplomatic efforts with the Syrian government and Syrian opposition forces, along with Russia, Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. All sides know that the solution to the Syrian war is political, not military. It is time to stop the bloodshed and the exodus of refugees, and to start talks that respect the self-determination of the Syrian people.
- In Afghanistan, the deliberate U.S. bombing of a Doctors Without Borders hospital was followed by a weak apology from President Obama, and his announcement that he would break his promise to end that war, and keep thousands of U.S. troops in

Afghanistan beyond his presidency. Fourteen years of deliberate and reckless killing of thousands of Afghanistan civilians has not brought Afghanistan peace or stability.

All U.S. troops, planes, drones, contractors and NATO allies must leave Afghanistan. Let the Afghan people find their own peace and determine their own future.

- Don't Tempt Nuclear War – End the U.S./NATO Confrontation with Russia. With Russia and the U.S. bombing different rebel targets in Syria, and with the U.S. and NATO pressing Russia on its very borders, the threat of yet another World War looms. The U.S. and Russia have thousands of nuclear weapons pointed at one another, with the capacity to kill many millions of people in each country. Nuclear war between Russia and the United States, which was miraculously avoided during the tense standoff of the Cold War, has re-emerged as an all too real possibility.
- In Ukraine, the U.S. poured in many millions of dollars to stir up opposition to the elected (if corrupt) government, even supporting fascist gangs who led a violent coup that brought a rightwing, western-friendly government to power. Russian speaking Ukrainians in the east were immediately targeted by fascist elements who took control of Ukrainian military and security forces. The Russian speaking minority felt it necessary to organize armed self-defense. Russia facilitated a plebiscite in the Ukrainian province of Crimea, where Russia's Black Sea naval fleet is based, leading to an overwhelming vote to rejoin the Russian federation.

U.S. and NATO forces must pull back from Russia's borders. U.S. and NATO forces are stationed in Poland and the Baltic nations, encircling Russia on its own borders. A coordinated international media campaign portrays Russian President Putin as the aggressor, while NATO carries out threatening war games and the U.S. beefs up its first strike nuclear capacity in Europe.

NATO, originally organized to confront the Warsaw Pact forces of the Soviet Union, should be dismantled, instead of being used to intimidate Russia and morphing into an international intervention force serving the aims of those who believe in U.S. and Western global hegemony.

- The U.S. should pull back from its so-called "Pivot to Asia," where 60% of U.S. naval forces will be deployed, and where the U.S. is building regional military alliances to confront China. In so doing, the U.S. has pressured the Japanese government to abandon its constitutional pledge not to deploy their military outside Japan's borders, forced the South Korean government – against the will of its people – to build a naval base on Jeju Island, and continues to ignore the pleas of the Okinawan people to return a sense of sanity to their island by removing omnipresent military the U.S.
- The United States, Russia and all nuclear powers must begin living up to their obligations under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), which requires them to negotiate in good faith to reduce and eventually eliminate all nuclear weapons. The Marshall Islands is suing the U.S. and all nuclear powers because they are doing just the opposite. The U.S. government recently announced a thirty-year program, estimated to cost One Trillion Dollars, to "modernize" its nuclear arsenal. In other

words, the U.S. is building new generations of nuclear bombs and missiles. This cannot stand.

- U.S. drone wars in Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia and beyond must end.
- The U.S. must begin dismantling its 900 military bases around the world.
- War Abroad Mirrors Racism and Violence at Home. The militarization of U.S. foreign policy and use of violence and war around the world is mirrored here at home by racist police killings, and the militarization of law enforcement and schools, where military recruiters often have total access to students. Racism and xenophobia are used to dehumanize Muslims and others in order to justify killing them in war in their own countries. We in Veterans For Peace realize this is the same hatred used here at home to justify killing black, brown, and poor people. It is the same fearmongering used to criminalize honest, hard-working people and tear immigrant families apart through deportation.

This Armistice Day Veterans For Peace calls for justice and peace at home and abroad. We call for the end to racist policies, and for equality for all people.

- Stop the War on Mother Earth. Veterans For Peace also sees the links between war and the destruction of the natural environment upon which all living creatures depend. Stubborn reliance on fossil fuels, and wars for control of them, are primary causes of the perilous climate change into which the world is descending. The ongoing nuclear meltdown in Fukushima, Japan reminds us that nuclear power is neither green nor safe. Shortsighted energy policies threaten to make entire regions of the planet uninhabitable, turning millions of people into climate refugees. New and dangerous wars for water, land and other precious resources are almost certain to follow.
- Between nuclear war and climate disaster, we are facing the possibility of Hell on Earth, UNLESS we create a united worldwide movement for peace, justice, equality and sustainability.

For all of these reasons, stand with Veterans For Peace on Armistice Day, November 11, 2015.

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## **At Thanksgiving, Veterans Call for Return to Nation's Founding Values**

*Date: 11/24/15*

Fourteen years after the fall of the World Trade Center towers in Manhattan, Paris, a city beloved by the world, has been dealt deadly blows by fanatical terrorists. It is the worst attack on Paris since World War II.

Amid the clamor for revenge, and despite the clear failure of the United States' so-called war on terror that sparked the destabilization of the Middle East and the rise of ISIL, French President François Hollande has promised a "ruthless" campaign against ISIL, in other words, a war that will be cruel, uncompromising and merciless.

Such a war will undoubtedly lead to more deaths of innocent men, women and children and an increase in the number refugees, already at historical proportions. It will further radicalize many as it deepens the profound distrust of the West felt by people throughout the Middle East.

**Veterans For Peace** believes that more war is not the answer and that peace is **possible**, but we must first acknowledge that people's fears are real. We realize that fear does not always lend itself to the clear and reflective thinking that will improve our understanding of the situation and mitigate the impact of fear. We understand terrorism is real and we must be vigilant in our efforts to confront and stop it. But invading more countries, dropping more bombs and killing yet more innocent civilians in Muslim countries are not the answers.

If we, the people, can pressure our government to change its policies, then we need not be immobilized by fear. **Concrete steps can be taken to confront terrorism by ending the U.S.'s continuing contribution to violence in the Middle East.**

1. Make diplomacy the number one priority. Top U.S. officials and much of the world agree that there is no military solution. It is imperative that talks now under way to resolve the crisis in Syria continue until a solution is found.
2. Stop supporting the violence. End weapons sales to the nations of the Middle East and to their proxy forces.
3. Withdraw U.S. troops. The presence of U.S. troops on the ground is a powerful recruiting tool and plays into the hands of ISIL. Boots on the ground will not defeat ISIL.
4. End airstrikes and the use of drones. This simply undermines U.S. legitimacy. The ongoing airstrikes kill and wound more innocent civilians, thus fueling more anger against the West. The mere presence of drones has terrorized the Middle East.
5. Open our hearts and our country to families who are fleeing from war. This is our tradition and what makes us unique. We are a nation of immigrants, and, yes, of refugees. We must reject fear and hate and embrace love and compassion. The United States must also pay its fair share of the cost of U.N. refugee resettlement programs.

For the past 14 years, U.S. politicians have continually gambled that war will work. They have sent U.S. service members to participate in a failed policy of endless war, a policy that has resulted in thousands of their deaths and tens of thousands physically wounded and psychologically scarred. Untold numbers of civilians have been killed and wounded with millions displaced in multiple countries as a result of these policies. Forbes magazine reported that the monetary cost for these failed policies is \$1.7 trillion. This is money that could have been better spent at home and abroad to support human needs: create jobs, help people find dignity and build a peaceful future. Yet we are told again and again that war is the answer.

If nothing else, the last 14 years have shown that this is a war the West cannot win. Instead of more war planning, now is the time to assess how the West has historically and disastrously tried to control the Middle East and understand that the root cause of this increase in terror has its genesis in our policies there. The West's involvement in the region for the last 100 years has demonstrated our ineptitude. Beginning with the secret Sykes-Picot agreement between the British and French to dismember the Ottoman Empire, unapologetic U.S. support of Israel, the overthrow of democratically elected governments in Iran and Iraq, the installation of the Shah in Iran and the endless wars that continue to ravage the region, we must understand that our actions and duplicity have set the stage for the blowback now being experienced in the West, with its most recent manifestation in Paris.

There is no doubt that the U.S. strategy in Iraq, which pitted Sunni against Shia and supported a sectarian Shia government that has marginalized Sunni communities, created a huge segment of people who are humiliated, frustrated, unemployed, and see no future—except with ISIL. The same can be said of the destruction the United States and NATO have wrought in Libya, where the elimination of the dictator Gaddafi has left an ungovernable state and an unabated flow of weapons and fighters throughout the region.

Terrorism is a tactic and an idea. It arises out of hopelessness, fear, despair and a lack of compassion. We must not let fear, anger, frustration and the need to do something drive us to make choices that merely exacerbate the problem and increase the impact of crippling fear. Bombs, boots on the ground and occupying a country cannot defeat an idea.

We must chart a different course that reduces our involvement and allows people to determine their own fate. We can shift from the inevitability of fear to a new reality of constructive engagement. Nothing other than a complete turnabout in our foreign policy can deal with the root causes of terrorism. In the short term, it is an intelligence and policing problem and not a military one. We must use intelligence resources in a cooperative way with our allies and our law enforcement agencies. In the long term, we must invest in global human needs and provide a path to a productive future for all.

We cannot answer every bomb with more and bigger bombs. We cannot continue to create military confrontations with nuclear-armed Russia and China. We need a new breed of courageous leaders who will listen to the people, not the militarists, the arms manufacturers, the oil companies and the global corporations.

**We at Veterans For Peace say: Enough. We challenge the American people to ask:** whose interests are served by endless wars? Who is paying for these wars? People are being driven by fear manipulated to support policies that are not in our interests. Peace is



harder than war, but far less expensive in blood and treasure. We need not be marginalized by fear. We must compel our government to take another path. In the words of John F. Kennedy, "Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures. And, however undramatic the pursuit of peace, the pursuit must go on."

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## **Escalation of War Calls Us To Act for Peace**

*Date: 12/4/15*

The terrorist attacks in Paris seem to have had their desired effect. The French government has responded by declaring a three-month state of emergency, curtailing civil rights and freedom of speech. Hundreds of Muslim families there are being terrorized in midnight raids. Climate change activists planning peaceful protests at the Paris climate change summit have been criminalized.

Like sharks smelling blood, one European country after another targeted Syria. French President Francois Hollande immediately stepped up French bombing raids. Germany followed suit and pledged 1200 combat troops for duty in Syria, ignoring its constitutional prohibition on deploying troops abroad. Not to be left out of the rush to mayhem, the UK government quickly debated, voted and set its own air force to bombing in Syria. Throughout Europe, right wing, anti-immigrant parties spouted alarmist rhetoric against the huge influx of refugees from Syria and other war-torn nations in the Middle East, gaining popular support in the process.

In the U.S., the same neocons who set these catastrophic events into motion with the 2003 U.S. invasion and eight-year occupation of Iraq, are pushing for yet more war. And why not? What looks like disaster to most of us has arguably been a great success for the neocons. They have achieved their goals of toppling strong nationalist governments in Iraq and Libya, rendering them helpless to resist foreign intervention. The next prize, a decapitated and dismembered Syria, seems within reach. All the while, their pals in the arms business are enjoying a huge bonanza.

Apparently bowing to pressure from the media, the Congress, the Defense Department, and from the neocons in his own administration, President Obama has agreed to send a small contingent of ground troops to Syria. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter referred to them as a "specialized expeditionary targeting force" (only about 200 or so troops, we are told). The mantra that "there is no military solution" has been replaced by "at least, not without boots on the ground."

Obama is also publicly defending Turkey's brazen shoot-down of a Russian warplane near its border with Syria, the first time that a NATO country has downed a Russian plane in 50 years. The plane crashed into Syrian territory after being shot down by a U.S. supplied F-16 fighter jet. A Russian helicopter coming to the pilot's rescue was then shot down by Turkish-backed Islamic rebels using a U.S. TOW missile. The U.S., Saudi Arabia, Turkey, France, Germany and Great Britain are all dedicated to overthrowing the Syrian government, and so are often colluding with the very rebels they claim to be fighting against. The Al Qaeda branch in Syria, Al Nusra, is now among the so-called "moderate" rebels who should not be attacked by western powers.

The war at home in the U.S. seems to be keeping pace with the war abroad. There are more police killings of African American youth, and credible allegations of police cover-ups in Minneapolis, Chicago and many other cities across the country. Mass shootings have become an everyday occurrence. The latest massacre, in San Bernardino, California was apparently carried out by a young Muslim American man and his wife. Even before this

horrible event, racist attacks on Muslim people and Mosques have been on the rise. The relatively small number of Syrian refugees that have been allowed into the U.S. are being greeted by xenophobic Republican governors who say they are unwelcome in their states, echoing presidential aspirant Donald Trump, who says that, if elected, he will throw them all out of the U.S. and put all Muslim Americans in a special database.

So this is an awful lot of bad news. It should at least be clear now that the struggles for Peace Abroad and Peace at Home are linked arm in arm. The good news is that many thousands of people in Europe, the UK and the U.S. are not buying into war and racism. They know it is not in their interests or in the interests of the future of this planet. Many young people are creatively participating in the climate change movement, while making connections to war and militarism.

Our own members of Veterans For Peace are in the streets in Chicago, in Minneapolis, at Fort Benning and Fort Stewart, Georgia. This week, a Veterans For Peace delegation arrived in Jeju island, South Korea, to join in the daily, eight-year long community resistance to the construction of a deep water naval base. Next week VFP members will join resisters to U.S. base expansion in Okinawa, Japan. We are making strong links around the world, while making links to critical struggles for peace and justice in our own communities.

It certainly does look like things might get worse, perhaps terribly worse, before they get better. But Peace IS Possible. Veterans For Peace has a special role in acting for peace. We continue to go out and make our voice as veterans working for peace heard. We will tell our own stories in order to help other people overcome their fear to push our political leaders to make wise decisions that will actually bring about peace. If we believe it. If we live it. If we act on it. If we make it so, there will be peace.