



2016 Convention Resolutions

Resolution 2016-01: Use Of Phrase “Military Service”

Rejected (Yes: 93, No: 475)

Resolution 2016-2: Normalization of United States-Iran Relations

Passed (Yes: 591, No: 12)

Resolution 2016-3: For A Just Resolution Of The War In Syria

Rejected (Yes: 120, No: 485)

Resolution 2016-4: Peace Conversion: Petition for a United Nations Peace Conversion Conference

Passed (Yes: 583, No: 9)

Resolution 2016-5: Climbers for Peace In Iran

Passed (Yes: 525, No: 15)

Resolution 2016-6: Oppose US Policy of Using Antipersonnel Landmines in Korea

Passed (Yes: 605, No: 7)

Resolution 2016-7: Support Haitian People’s Demand for Free & Fair Elections

Passed (Yes: 605, No: 4)

Resolution 2016-8: Defend the Public Post Office

Passed (Yes: 589, No: 14)

Resolution 2016-9: Asia-Pacific Pivot For Peace And Sustainable Democracy

Passed (Yes: 583, No: 7)

Resolution 2016-10: Post 9/11 Veterans

Passed (Yes: 564, No: 20)

Resolution 2016-11: Political Affiliations Of Veterans For Peace

Rejected (Yes: 54, No: 529)

Resolution 2016-12: Resolution to Clarify VFP Mission and Priorities

Rejected (Yes: 70, No: 509)

Resolution 2016-13: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Iran /
Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Syria

Passed (Yes: 588, No: 10)

Resolution 2016-14: Resolution to Reduce US Support of Israeli Aggression

Passed (Yes: 590, No: 15)

Resolution 2016-16: Resolution On Deported Veterans

Passed (Yes: 582, No: 6)

Resolution 2016-20: Resolution Opposing Arbitrary Resumption of Helipad
Construction at Takae, Okinawa

Passed (Yes: 580, No: 8)

Resolution 2016-21: Veterans For Peace Calls For an End to U.S. Wars in the Middle
East and Afghanistan

Passed (Yes: 604, No: 2)

**Rejected Resolutions (Sent To Resolution Committee But Requires By-Law
Changes):**

Rejected Resolution on VFP Board Relations with VFP Working Groups

Rejected Resolution on VFP Resolution Formats

Resolution 2016-01: Use Of Phrase “Military Service”

Rejected (Yes: 93, No: 475)

Whereas one of the objectives of Veterans For Peace is to abolish war as an instrument of national policy, and

Whereas national policy will only change when policies and actions are challenged, and

Whereas Veterans For Peace has been challenging national policy since 1985, and

Whereas there are many actions that can be taken to challenge policy and abolish war, and

Whereas challenging the language of war and militarism is one of the actions, and

Whereas referring to the military as “service” (i.e. “Thank you for your service” or “Served their country in the military”) can be seen as an acceptance of militarism and thus an acceptance of war as national policy;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace members refrain from using the word service as a synonym for the word military.

Submitted by Army Stieber – Chapter 26

Endorsed by Chapter 26, Chapter 74, Chapter 93

Resolution 2016-2: Normalization of United States-Iran Relations

Passed (Yes: 591, No: 12)

Whereas diplomatic, business, cultural and civilian relations at all levels are necessary for countries to have normal friendly, cooperative and productive relations, and

Whereas these types of relations have been virtually non-existent between the United States and Iran for over three decades, and

Whereas the 'Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action' (<http://www.state.gov/e/eb/tfs/spi/iran/jcpoa/>) to limit Iran's nuclear program approved in 2015 has opened a window of opportunity to have normal relations between the United States and Iran based upon cooperation and mutual respect.

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans for Peace encourages the United States government business and social organizations to reach out to Iran and its people to restore full diplomatic, business and social relations with Iran as quickly as possible. This would include full diplomatic relations and multiple exchanges between ordinary citizens of both countries including Rotary Clubs, veterans groups, Sister Cities, cultural and sports organizations.

Submitted by Fred Ptucha - Chapter 71

Resolution 2016-3: For A Just Resolution Of The War In Syria

Rejected (Yes: 120, No: 485)

Whereas Veterans for Peace has the explicit goal of abolishing war, and

Whereas the war in Syria is currently the bloodiest war on Earth, causing an estimated half million deaths, and

Whereas the conflict in Syria is dangerous for all humanity, involving military intervention by the US, Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and others, and the repeated use of outlawed chemical weapons and untargeted barrel bombs, and

Whereas civilians in Syria are experiencing the worst effects of this war, including food and medical blockades, and the mass destruction of housing and infrastructure, and

Whereas the war in Syria has dangerously aggravated relations between the US and Russia, while a peaceful just settlement in Syria would go far towards resolving these ominous tensions;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace denounces the war crimes of all parties in the Syrian conflict and VFP calls out war crimes regardless of which party has committed them. While we have a particular responsibility to oppose the criminal actions of the US government, we also denounce the well-documented war crimes of the Assad regime, Russia and other parties, and

Be It Further Resolved that Veterans for Peace urges chapters and members to get involved in projects that “heal the wounds of war” by providing medical, food and other humanitarian relief to Syrians inside Syria as well as refugees abroad, and to seek out contact with Syrian-Americans in our communities, and

Be It Further Resolved that Veterans for Peace calls upon the international community to press the parties to negotiate seriously to end the war, and

Be It Further Resolved that Veterans For Peace urges its members and chapters to speak out for a just and peaceful settlement to the war in Syria, avoiding simplistic slogans and analyses that ignore the deep complexities of this conflict.

Submitted by Andy Berman - Chapter 27

Resolution 2016–4: Peace Conversion: Petition for a United Nations Peace Conversion Conference

Passed (Yes: 583, No: 9)

Whereas warfare is obsolete, and is destroying the environment, slaughtering innocent people, exhausting the world economy, causing intolerable psychological and moral injury, and generating tens of millions of desperate refugees, and

Whereas a worldwide military-industrial complex generates endless warfare, and

Whereas Peace Conversion of human economy and culture is essential for human survival;

Therefore, Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace endorses this petition, and encourages everyone to sign, circulate, and deliver it to leaders of the United Nations and all nations:

Petition for a United Nations Peace Conversion Conference

We, the undersigned, ask the United Nations and all nations to organize a United Nations Peace Conversion Conference, to make practical plans to move away from warfare and military confrontation in international affairs, and phase out military industries, with an orderly transition to peaceful and sustainable production to meet the growing demands of climate change, and to meet basic human needs worldwide.

Submitted by John Lewallen, Chapter 116

Endorsed by Chapter 71

Resolution 2016-5: Climbers for Peace In Iran

Passed (Yes: 525, No: 15)

Whereas Chapter 71 of VFP has been a co-sponsor of Climbers for Peace - <http://climbersforpeace.com> - since its inception in 1997, and

Whereas Climbers for Peace has had ten very successful expeditions with climbers from twelve countries and summited some of the worlds iconic mountains, and

Whereas these expeditions have provided inspiration for peace loving people everywhere, and

Whereas VFP expects to be invited to send a team of VFP members to do a Peace Climb of Mount Damervand which is a 18,400 foot high mountain that is sacred to the Persian people, and

Whereas the picture of American and Iranian climbers holding the flags of our two countries on the summit of Iran's sacred mountain will help improve relations between the American and Iranian people;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace, as a national organization be the primary sponsor and offer emotional, spiritual and public support for the Eleventh Expedition of Climbers for Peace to do a Peace Climb in Iran in 2017, and

Be It Further Resolved that all costs for the 2017 Peace Climb will be paid by climb team members.

Submitted by Fred Ptucha, Chapter 71

Resolution 2016-6: Oppose US Policy of Using Antipersonnel Landmines in Korea

Passed (Yes: 605, No: 7)

Whereas, the U.S. and Republic Of Korea (ROK) militaries have planted millions of landmines within the DMZ and the area between DMZ and Seoul during the Korean War, as well as in the post-Armistice period (source: Landmine Monitor), and

Whereas the U.S. military stockpiles about 1.1 million M14 and M16 antipersonnel landmines in South Korea and abroad, for use in any future war in Korea, and

Whereas counting from the Armistice Agreement of 1953, antipersonnel landmines planted in South Korea have killed or injured some three thousand Korean civilians and soldiers, as well as numerous U.S. soldiers, and

Whereas the Mine Ban Treaty (aka "Ottawa Convention") went into effect on March 1, 1999, and 162 nations have joined the Treaty so far, banning the use of antipersonnel landmines ("APL"), and

However, the U.S. Government announced a new policy on APL in September 2014, that it "will not use APL outside the Korean Peninsula....and undertake to destroy APL stockpiles not required for the defense of the Republic of Korea," and

Whereas, such an exceptional policy of allowing the U.S. military to use APLs in Korea only violates the international humanitarian law prohibiting any use of force that fails to distinguish between civilians and soldiers;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans for Peace (VFP) at its national convention in Berkeley, California, August 13, 2016...

- 1) Calls upon U.S. government to discard its discriminatory APL policy of September 2014, and join the Mine Ban Treaty (a.k.a. "Ottawa Convention") promptly, without further delay or excuse;
- 2) Calls upon U.S. government to remove and destroy all U.S.-owned antipersonnel landmines planted or stockpiled in South Korea; and
- 3) Urges VFP members and local Chapters to send a copy of this resolution to their respective members of Congress.

Submitted by John Kim, Coordinator, VFP-Korea Peace Campaign

Co-sponsored by VFP-Korea Peace Campaign; Chapters 34, 109, and 113

Resolution 2016-7: Support Haitian People's Demand for Free & Fair Elections

Passed (Yes: 605, No: 4)

Whereas in 1803 the Haitian people defeated Napoleon's army and in 1804 declared independence, abolishing slavery & ending French colonial rule in Haiti. Their example reverberated throughout the world, and

Whereas on Feb. 29, 2004, the U.S., French & Canadian armies overthrew the elected government of Haiti, abducting President Aristide and flying him to exile in Africa on a U.S. military plane. The coup led to a wave of killings and persecution of the popular movement. Three months later, Haiti was placed under United Nations military occupation, which continues today, and

Whereas in 2015, after being excluded for 11 years, Aristide's Fanmi Lavalas party was finally able to run candidates again, including Dr. Maryse Narcisse for President. However, the elections saw pervasive vote buying, ballot stuffing and vote rigging, with U.N. officials caught participating in the fraud. U.S.-financed National police and paramilitaries fired into working-class areas to discourage voting. (Human Rights & Labor Fact-Finding Delegation, Nov. 2015 Report), and

Whereas despite overwhelming evidence of election fraud, the U.S. embassy, which had paid \$33 million to finance the elections, endorsed the election results, and

Whereas defiant Haitians mounted demonstrations of tens of thousands over many months, denouncing the "electoral coup" and demanding the stolen elections be thrown out. They were shot, tear-gassed, beaten. Some were killed. Fanmi Lavalas, long the most popular political party in Haiti, filed legal challenges, and

Whereas, Haiti's government finally bowed to popular mobilizations throughout the country, threw out the fraudulent elections, and scheduled a new Presidential election for October 9, 2016;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans for Peace stands in solidarity with the defiant people of Haiti in their insistence on fair elections free of coercion or foreign interference. Haitians are marching for their country to be free from foreign intervention and control.

Submitted by Dave Welsh, Chapter 162

Endorsed by Chapter 162

Resolution 2016-8: Defend the Public Post Office

Passed (Yes: 589, No: 14)

Whereas postal workers – about 20 per cent of whom are veterans – and communities across the country are in a fight to preserve the public Post Office that people have depended on since its founding in 1775. Private companies, and their allies in Congress, are scheming to dismantle and privatize this highly successful, \$69-Billion-in-annual-revenue operation, and

Whereas the 1970 Postal Strike shut down the nation’s entire mail system for most of a week, and brought about big changes for its workers. What used to be work for poverty wages became a living-wage job with a union contract. That’s one big reason why the 1% today are targeting the Post Office, the nation’s largest unionized employer, and

Whereas in every state people are organizing to defend postal jobs and services; stop the privatization, closing or sale of postal facilities; keep door-to-door and Saturday delivery; stop the degrading of service standards including in rural areas; boycott scab stores like Staples that have non-union “postal counters”; and bring back postal banking, using our network of 30,000 post offices to provide safe basic checking and savings for the millions, and

Whereas over 80 national organizations -- representing seniors, retirees, civil rights and veterans groups, as well as labor, business, community and faith-based organizations -- have come together with the postal unions to form A Grand Alliance to Save the Public Postal Service, organizing to stop the privatization and destruction of our national treasure, the Post Office;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans for Peace join the growing movement of postal workers and aroused communities who want to preserve the 241-year-old public Post Office we all depend on, and

Be It Further Resolved that Veterans for Peace explore the possibility of adding our name to be part of A Grand Alliance to Save the Public Postal Service.6-8

Submitted by Dave Welsh, Chapter 162

Endorsed by Chapter 162

Resolution 2016-9: Asia-Pacific Pivot For Peace And Sustainable Democracy

Passed (Yes: 583, No: 7)

Whereas, Okinawa has been burdened with US military bases for more than seventy years; And whereas, while the US base presence is authorized under the Security Treaty between the US and Japan. Japan insists that 75% of those bases be located in tiny Okinawa (0.6% of Japan's territory), and

Whereas on September 15th 2015 the City Assembly of Berkeley California followed by City Council of Cambridge, Massachusetts on December 21st 2015, resolved to oppose the planned relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma to the Henoko district of Nago, and promote solidarity with Okinawa, and

Whereas, twenty-one years have passed since the US and Japan agreed to remove the aging and obsolete Air Station, but only on the condition that it be replaced by a new super-base at Henoko, and

Whereas, this new base project, in addition to being a further humiliation of Okinawans, promises to be an environmental catastrophe, as it means nine years of dumping three and a half million truckloads of dirt over the pristine coral garden of Oura Bay, home of many endangered species, including the Dugong, and

Whereas, the overwhelming majority of the Okinawan people, the elected governments of the Prefecture and Nago City, are adamantly opposed to this new base;

Therefore Be It Resolved that VFP Chapters are urged to support the Okinawan people and encourage resolutions in their communities for their three short-term demands:

- 1) That the 1st Marine Air Wing, Futenma, Ginowan City, be moved out of Okinawa;
- 2) That construction of the new base at Henoko cease, and the plan to build a new base there be abandoned respecting the democratic rights of the people;
- 3) That all of the accident-prone Osprey aircraft be moved out of Okinawa.

Submitted by Edward Heinrich Sanchez, VFP Ryukyu-Okinawa Chapter Kokusai

Resolution 2016-10: Post 9/11 Veterans

Passed (Yes: 564, No: 20)

Whereas a significant majority of the veteran membership of Veterans For Peace (VFP) is comprised of veterans who are not of the post-cold war veteran generation, and

Whereas the membership of this demographic in particular is absolutely essential to the effectiveness, success, and most importantly the very survival of VFP (including our political and social capital, effectiveness, access to power, and legitimacy in the political and public eye in the years to come), and

Whereas time, money, and resources are limited for any organization, including Veterans for Peace;

Therefore Be It Resolved that it is suggested that VFP consider the recruitment of post-cold war veterans to be one of our highest priorities; and that it is strongly suggested that all bodies, including the Board of Directors and all committees and sub-committees, should carefully consider this organizational priority while making day-to-day decisions about how to spend our limited amount of time, money, and manpower. Further, it is strongly suggested that efforts to expand the recruitment and retention of post-cold-war veterans be given serious consideration, building upon the already significant work of VFP in this regard.

Submitted by Travis Weine, VFP Member-At--Large

Resolution 2016-11: Political Affiliations Of Veterans For Peace

Rejected (Yes: 54, No: 529)

Whereas the Statement of Purpose for VFP is as follows:

- To restrain our government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations
- To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons
- To seek justice for veterans and victims of war
- To abolish war as an instrument of national policy

Whereas in order to achieve these goals, VFP requires a diverse veteran membership, which includes veteran members of all demographics, races, ethnicities, nationalities, genders, ages, and also political affiliations (so long as those affiliations are in accordance with and do not contradict the VFP mission statement);

Therefore Be It Resolved that VFP members should strongly consider the following:

(1) For any affiliated group/organization/political position of either National VFP or a VFP chapter, it is suggested that their connection to the mission statement of VFP – either directly or indirectly – be strongly evaluated and considered.

(2) For any affiliated group/organization/political position of either National VFP or a VFP chapter, it is suggested that the potential of any group, organization, or political position to alienate those (potential) veteran members who – while they may be in support of the VFP mission statement, may nevertheless decline to join VFP based on a perception that we only support liberal causes - be strongly evaluated and considered, and

Be It Further Resolved that it is strongly suggested that the recruitment and addition of VFP members who believe in, support, and abide by the VFP statement of purpose should take precedence over any organizational endorsement, political position, or partnership with any particular group or organization, particularly if a given endorsement, relationship, or position has both no tangible connection to our mission statement, and the strong potential to unnecessarily alienate potential veteran members who would be sympathetic to our cause.

Submitted by Travis Weiner, VFP Member-At--Large

Resolution 2016-12: Resolution to Clarify VFP Mission and Priorities

Rejected (Yes: 70, No: 509)

Whereas some VFP members feel that our leadership has progressively drifted from its original mission into issues such as “peace at home” and organization building with anti-racist and other human rights organizations, which however worthy, are distractions from its central purpose and unique capacities, and

Whereas the United Nations and Veterans for Peace were established for the identical purpose of preventing war, and

Whereas the United Nations Charter is the internationally ratified document establishing principles and institutions to achieve that goal, and

Whereas Article I of the United Nations Charter, in order to preserve peace, proscribes “the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state;” and

Whereas, all veterans once swore to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States,” which in Article VI defines all US treaty obligations as the “supreme Law of the Land,” and

Whereas the UN Charter and Fourth Geneva Convention are US treaty obligations, and

Whereas most VFP members are citizens of a country that has waged continuous war for ethnic cleansing, resource control and economic colonialism throughout its history - directly, covertly and by proxy - which remains in Martin Luther King’s words, “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world” despite the UN Charter, and

Whereas US citizens are responsible to oppose and contain American aggression, not that of other nations or groups that have neither attacked nor threatened us;

Therefore Be It Resolved that VFP should focus on its monumental educational mission, strategically supplementing rather than simply blending into the generic peace movement, exposing political subterfuges, media deceptions, methods and motives of covert aggression, US relations with its collaborators in proxy aggression, the history and geography of US imperial operations, hidden economic motives, and anti-democratic government secrecy about military use and abuse of our tax dollars masquerading as “security.”

Submitted by Jack Dresser and Eduardo Cohen

Resolution 2016-13: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Iran

Whereas the United Nations and Veterans for Peace were established for the identical purpose of preventing war, and VFP positions should therefore support the UN Charter which prohibits “the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state”, and

Whereas economic sanctions are acts of war against the political independence of another state, and

Whereas Iran has not attacked or threatened to attack the United States;

Therefore Be It Resolved that VFP recommends full normalization of relations between the United States and Iran, including withdrawal of all covert and overt support of aggression against its government, and discontinuation of economic sanctions or threats of sanctions without due process in international judicial bodies.

Approved by the VFP membership, December 2016

Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Syria

Whereas the United Nations and Veterans for Peace were established for the identical purpose of preventing war, and VFP positions should therefore support the UN Charter which prohibits “the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state”, and

Whereas economic sanctions, instigation of or assistance to internally dissenting factions, interference with internal political processes, or covert efforts at “regime change” are acts of war against the political independence of another state, and

Whereas Syria has not attacked or threatened to attack the United States;

Therefore Be It Resolved that VFP recommends full normalization of relations between the United States and Syria, including recognition of Syria’s elected government and constitution, withdrawal of all covert and overt support of internal or external aggression against the Syrian government, and discontinuation of economic sanctions of any kind; and

Be It Further Resolved that VFP recommends that the US Department of Agriculture and other appropriate US agencies extend a helping hand to assist Syria with the effects of its recent devastating drought.

Approved by the VFP membership, December 2016

*Submitted by Jack Dresser and Eduardo Cohen
National Chair and Vice-Chair, VFP Palestine and Middle East Working Group*

Resolution 2016-14: Resolution to Reduce US Support of Israeli Aggression

Passed (Yes: 590, No: 15)

Whereas Israel has continuously violated the UN Charter, Articles 13 and 17 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and UN Resolution 194 since 1948, seizing land and properties, expelling indigenous Palestinians and prohibiting the return of Palestinian refugees, and

Whereas Israel has continuously violated the Fourth Geneva Convention since 1967 by taking land by force, moving its own population into occupied land, collectively and extrajudicially punishing the occupied population including indiscriminate murder, torture, political imprisonment and property theft, and disregarding other Geneva-defined rights of the occupied, and

Whereas the United States provides over \$3 billion foreign aid to Israel, primarily in the form of weapons transfers, plus another \$1 billion in revenues lost through charitable deductions to pro-Israel organizations (e.g., Jewish National Fund), and

Whereas the Foreign Assistance Act prohibits U.S. aid to any country with a consistent record of human rights violations, and

Whereas the Arms Export Control Act prohibits U.S. weapons transfers to any country using these arms against civilians, and

Whereas the U.S. has used its UN Security Council veto 44 times to protect Israel from international censure or sanctions, each time isolated in its vote by all other permanent and rotating members of the UNSC, and

Whereas the Israel lobby and influence network extorts U.S. elected officials into financial support and diplomatic protection of Israel by giving or withholding campaign funding, and

Whereas the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement was launched by civil society to bypass the U.S. government roadblock, which is vigorously opposed by the Israel lobby and social influence network;

Therefore Be It Resolved that VFP encourages its membership to demand compliance with U.S. law by their congressional representatives, to challenge pro-Israel influences in universities and faith communities where anti-BDS efforts are heavily concentrated, and use social media for public education.

*Submitted by Jack Dresser and Eduardo Cohen
National Chair and Vice-Chair, VFP Palestine and Middle East Working Group*

Resolution 2016-15: Support For An Independence Referendum In Northern Ireland and an All-Ireland Re-Unification Referendum

Rejected

Whereas, given the peaceful end of hostilities in Northern Ireland with the historic 1998 Good Friday Agreement, negotiated with American support, and ratified by the governments of Ireland and the United Kingdom, includes provisions for the creation of All-Ireland institutions of governance and leaves open the possibility for a vote for achieving a re-United Ireland through purely democratic and peaceful means, and

Whereas, in the June 23, 2016 "Brexit" vote, 55.8% of the electorate in Northern Ireland voted to remain in the European Union, thus charting a path similar to Scotland (62% voted to stay in the EU), and

Whereas, the countries of England and Wales narrowly approved leaving the EU, and

Whereas, with the Republic of Ireland (South) remaining in the EU, and the North of Ireland, as a part of the UK, being forced to leave the EU, the small island nation of 6 million population will again be separated by militarized borders as foreign nations, and

Whereas, the national U.S. organization of Veterans For Peace supports the right to free and democratic elections of the populace of all sovereign nations to determine the course of their country, and adheres to the second tenet of the VFP Statement of Purpose, which restrains our government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations;

Therefore Be It Resolved that the national U.S. organization of Veterans For Peace supports future democratic elections on referenda by the member nations of the United Kingdom and Ireland to determine their membership, or not, in the European Union, and

Therefore Be It Further Resolved that national Veterans For Peace supports a future democratic vote: to continue the partition of the island nation of Ireland, or to commence some form of national reconciliation and unity, to be determined by the sovereign all-Ireland electorate.

Submitted by Nadya Connolly Williams

Resolution 2016-16: Resolution On Deported Veterans

Passed (Yes: 582, No: 6)

Resolution on amending U.S. Code to clearly state that U.S. military servicemembers are noncitizen nationals and to petition the President and the Department of Homeland Security to stay the removal from the U.S. of all foreign nationals who are serving or who have served in the Armed Forces of the U.S.; to lobby all members of Congress state by state and district by district to honor their sacrifices, and to amend United States Code and provide all alien servicemembers the equivalent status of a Noncitizen Nationals.

Whereas U.S. servicemembers are being and have been deported after serving in the military from the U.S., and

Whereas the current U.S. Code provides: that the term “national of the United States” means: a citizen of the U.S., or a person who, though not a citizen of the United States, owes permanent allegiance to the U.S. (8 U.S.C. 1101(a) (22)), and

Whereas Federal law requires everyone who enlists/re-enlists in the Armed Forces of the United States to take the Oath of Enlistment. This Oath and the Oath of Citizenship contain this pledge of loyalty, and

Whereas veterans who have served our nation in every war from WWII to Iraq and Afghanistan strongly believe the oath of enlistment is a permanent oath of allegiance to the U.S.;

Therefore Be It Resolved that VFP nationally calls upon the U.S. House of Representative and U.S. Senate to amend the United States Code 8 U.S.C. 1101(a) (22) to clearly state:

“The following shall be nationals*, but not citizens of the United States: (1) A person who, by conscription or enlistment, entered any branch of the United States armed forces. This shall be retroactive to servicepersons previously removed from the United States”, and

Be It Further Resolved that VFP calls upon the President and the Department of Homeland Security to stay their further removal from the U.S.

Submitted by Willie Hager, Chapter 174

Resolution 2016-20: Resolution Opposing Arbitrary Resumption of Helipad Construction at Takae, Okinawa

Passed (Yes: 580, No: 8)

Whereas, in Japan's upper house election of July 10, Okinawan voters elected the candidate opposing construction of new US bases at Henoko and Takae by a margin of 59% to 41% over his government-supported pro-base opponent, and

Whereas, before dawn on the following day, the Japanese Government began trucking construction materials into the helipad site at Takae, sending a clear message to the Okinawans that their opinions don't matter, and

Whereas, the out-of-court settlement agreed to by the Government and Okinawa Prefecture stipulates that the Government must halt construction related to the proposed base at Henoko, and

Whereas, the helipads at Takae are, like the airstrips planned for Henoko, designed to accommodate the Osprey aircraft, so the two are operationally related and resuming construction on the former illegally violates the settlement, and

Whereas, on July 22, at dawn, reportedly as many as 800 riot police, collected from all over Japan, swarmed into the tiny village of Takae (which is surrounded by a sub-tropical forest that could qualify as a world heritage site), dragged away the protesters, tore down their tents and towed away their cars, reaffirming that the Government views Okinawa as a colony, and

Whereas, we as former members of the US military feel shame and outrage that the US military is complicit in this blatantly discriminatory treatment of the Okinawan people;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace condemns the renewed helipad construction at Takae, and urges the US Government, and in particular the US military, to communicate to the Japanese government that the US wants no part of this shameful, anti-democratic and discriminatory action, that it does not want new bases at such a price, and that it wishes Japan to abandon the plan to construct new US bases at Henoko and Takae.

(Submitted by Doug Lummis, VFP Ryukyu-Okinawa Chapter Kokusai)

Resolution 2016-21: Veterans For Peace Calls For an End to U.S. Wars in the Middle East and Afghanistan

Passed (Yes: 604, No: 2)

Whereas, the U.S. government and military continue to wage war upon the peoples of the Middle East and Afghanistan, and

Whereas, the U.S. has recently begun to bomb Libya, a nation state that has already been destroyed by U.S. and NATO bombing and regime change, and

Whereas, the U.S. continues to increase the number of U.S. troops being deployed to the war in Iraq, and

Whereas, the U.S. is bombing Syria, while supporting armed extremist groups who seek to overthrow one of the last secular states in the Middle East, and

Whereas, the U.S. is supporting Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen, a war with ever increasing civilian casualties, and

Whereas, the U.S. war in Afghanistan, the longest in our history, continues unabated with no end in sight, and

Whereas, any claim that these wars on sovereign nations constitute a "war on terrorism" are rendered false by the fact that they are actually helping to create more terrorism and more armed extremist organizations, and

Whereas, these U.S. wars have killed hundreds of thousands of people and made millions homeless refugees, and

Whereas, these "regime change" wars seek to destroy independent nations in the Middle East in order to control oil and other resources, and in order to assert regional hegemony for the U.S. and Israel, and

Whereas, these wars are robbing much needed funds that should be going to human needs, such as healthcare, housing and education in the United States, and

Whereas, these wars continue to kill men and women in the U.S. Armed Forces, and to cause great trauma to veterans, including PTSD and Moral Injury, often leading to suicide and self-destructive behavior, and

Whereas, these U.S. wars have caused environmental and ecological degradation, further decimating a region already suffering from widespread resource depletion and the devastating effects of climate change such as severe and prolonged drought, as well as from violent outcomes such as climate-driven conflict; and

Whereas, these wars exacerbate big power tensions and increase the very real risk of nuclear war, and

Whereas, these U.S. wars are in contravention of the U.S. Constitution (Art. 2, Sec. 8) and the

laws of the United States, including, but not limited to, its treaties, which are the "Supreme Law of the Land" as provided for in Article 10, and also violate the War Powers Act, the United Nations Charter, Authorization of the Use of Military Force 2001, and the Kellogg-Briand Treaty, and

Whereas, in summary, these U.S. wars are not in the interest of the vast majority of the peoples of the Middle East, the people of Afghanistan, the people of the United States, or the people of the world;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace calls on the United States government to bring a complete halt to all its war making in the Middle East and Afghanistan, to bring all U.S. troops and contractors home immediately, to cease its "regime change" efforts in the Middle East and elsewhere, to end economic sanctions and all forms of war by other means, and to redirect resources to helping war refugees, and

Be It Further Resolved that Veterans For Peace rededicates itself to working with the larger peace movement to bring an end to these illegal, immoral, disastrous and extremely dangerous wars.

Submitted by VFP Board of Directors

Rejected Resolution on VFP Resolution Formats

Submitted Resolution

Whereas the VFP Board has arbitrarily decided to limit the length of resolutions submitted;

Whereas one function of a resolution is educational, to inform members about key issues addressed, about which member knowledge will predictably vary widely;

Whereas different issues have widely different ranges of complexity with interwoven or sequential variables that must be sufficiently well-understood to make reasonable decisions;

Whereas artificial compression of resolutions has been justified on the presumptive grounds that “people don’t like to read that much;”

Whereas this appears to be an anti-intellectual expectation;

Therefore be it resolved that the Board lacks authority to impose any such limits, and that none should be imposed except by vote of the full VFP membership.

*The following was a request to amend the resolution three days after the resolution deadline...
Therefore be it resolved that the (sic) no arbitrary length should be imposed on resolutions except by vote of the full VFP membership.*

Submitted by Jack Dresser and Eduardo Cohen
National chair and vice-chair, Palestine and Middle East Working Group
541-579-4244, jack@jdresser.com

Rationale For Rejection Of VFP Resolution Format Resolution By Resolutions Committee Chair

The VFP By-Laws, Article 10, Section 4 (Resolutions), item (a) states...

The Board of Directors will appoint a resolutions committee whose responsibility it will be to receive and screen all resolutions submitted for consideration at the annual meeting. It will be the responsibility of that committee to establish and publish appropriate rules, procedures and deadlines for this process. Such Rules will include provisions for bringing resolutions after the deadline. All decisions of this committee will be subject to approval by the board of directors.

The resolution makers (which submitted this proposed resolution in the last few late-night hours of the resolution deadline date hence no time for a resolution research and review before the deadline) claim that “*the VFP Board has arbitrarily decided to limit the length of resolutions submitted*” (the Resolution Protocols limit resolutions to 300 words), and that “*the Board lacks authority to impose any such limits*” (original “*Therefore*”) or “*that the (sic) no arbitrary length should be imposed on resolutions except by vote of the full VFP membership*” (amended “*Therefore*”).

However, the VFP By-Laws clearly state that *“It will be the responsibility of that (resolution) committee to establish and publish appropriate rules”* (which it has through the Resolution Protocols), and that *“All decisions of this committee will be subject to approval by the board of directors”*.

A number of years ago, in response to excessively long resolutions being submitted, the Resolutions Committee revised its Resolution Protocols (rules) to limit resolutions to 300 words, which is roughly one page of print and also happens to be the maximum size most newspapers allow for Op-Ed submissions. This decision of the Resolution Committee to change resolution rules (Resolution Protocols) on resolution word limits was forwarded to the national office for Board approval. Subsequently every year, prior to the start of the yearly resolution submission period, the Resolution Committee forwards to the Board (through the national office) an updated Resolution Protocol document for their approval which for the past few years has contained the 300 word resolution limit.

So again under the By-Laws, the Board clearly has the right and responsibility to approve or reject Resolution Committee “rules” (Resolution Protocols) and has legally chosen to approve resolution limits of 300 words. If there are to be membership-driven exemptions to the authority the Board has to approving Resolution Committee “rules”, these specific exemptions would need to be included in By-Laws Article 10, Section 4 and hence require a By-Laws revision.

Rejected Resolution on VFP Board Relations with VFP Working Groups

Submitted Resolution...

Whereas several years ago VFP formed working groups to specialize in areas of member interest, experience and knowledge;

Whereas the functions of these groups has included advising the VFP Board on policy positions, submitting resolutions for consideration and voting by the VFP membership, and providing agenda items including workshops for the annual VFP national conference.

Whereas some policy positions have been decided and workshops proposed without consultation with, or inclusion of, appropriate working groups or their key members.

Therefore, be it resolved that formal VFP policy decisions, including fiduciary commitments regarding income, expenditures, and public representations on behalf of the organization, as well as conference presentations and activities, include appropriate consultation with, inclusion of, and approval of the entire membership through electronic vote or working groups focused on the issue considered.

Submitted by Jack Dresser and Eduardo Cohen
National chair and vice-chair, Palestine and Middle East Working Group
541-579-4244, jack@jdresser.com

Rationale For Rejection Of VFP Board Relations with VFP Working Groups Resolution By Resolutions Committee Chair

Article 5 (Board Of Directors), Section 1 (General Powers) states that *"The management of VFP shall be by and through the Board of Directors"*.

The makers of the resolution (which submitted this proposed resolution in the last few late-night hours of the resolution deadline date hence no time for a resolution research and review before the deadline) state *"that "formal VFP policy decisions, including fiduciary commitments regarding income, expenditures, and public representations on behalf of the organization, as well as conference presentations and activities, include appropriate consultation with, inclusion of, and approval of the entire membership through electronic vote or working groups focused on the issue considered"*.

Since this proposed resolution would effectively transfer the management of VFP from the Board of Directors to the membership (and requiring numerous electronic votes at a cost to VFP), this matter would require a By-Laws change.