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VETERANS FOR PEACE

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VFP Newsletter

Winter 2017

Prospects for Peace under a New Commander-in-chief



JONATHAN CLARK, NOGALES INTERNATIONAL

Michael McPhearson stands in front of the border fence in Nogales, after the VFP-led march to the border on October 8. More photos p.8.

By Michael T. McPhearson,
Executive Director, Veterans For Peace

The Veterans For Peace statement of purpose compels us to contemplate the possible foreign policy of any new commander-in-chief. The leadership, worldview, and offices of the president can either help forward all our goals or impede progress.

But before I comment specifically on war, peace, and President Trump, let us reflect on what has transpired before him. Because I was there, I will begin twenty-six years ago, with what I believe is the beginning of the current round of U.S. wars. From 1991 to today, before Trump, the U.S. has had two Republican and two Democrat presidents. During that time, from all four we have seen similar policies of conducting warfare to expand U.S. global influence and dominance. Thus, I do not expect anything very different from any new president.

However, each president has offered the possibility of progress on some issue, and areas to defend. It is difficult to know what a Trump foreign policy will look like. But his proposed appointments provide insight, and we can look at what he said during and after the campaign. Perhaps there will be a decrease in tensions with Russia. Perhaps the U.S. will stop pursuing

regime change in Syria. Both would be good outcomes. However, we also know that president elect Trump tweeted, “The United States must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability until such time as the world comes to its senses regarding nukes.” I don’t know what that means, but certainly the world does not need to increase nuclear weapons or make existing ones more capable.

He constantly claims the U.S. military is depleted, and promises to increase spending to fix this problem. An online *Forbes* article estimates he plans a \$500 billion to \$1 trillion increase over the next 10 years. It is alarming that President Trump managed to create tensions between himself and Chinese leaders before he took office. Perhaps most telling about Trump as commander-in-chief is the idea of peace through strength. Or in other words, peace through fear. This idea in practice is not that different from most all presidents before him. In fact, it is not simply determined by who is president.

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Privatization of the V.A.

As the keynote speaker of our 2016 convention, investigative journalist Dr. Ann Jones chose to focus on a scandal brewing within the Veterans Administration system. Actually, it is brewing outside of the system as well, creeping into our lives.

The infamous Koch brothers and others are trying to wrest control of the system from the government in order to hand it over to Big Pharma and private, for-profit health-care providers. In a word, they are trying to capitalize on our physical and psychological needs.

Now that the election has set the stage for accelerated privatization, we have to take stock of what this money-grubbers’ movement means for veterans, and then figure out strategies to combat it. So, we asked VFP member Buzz Davis to give us a brief rundown of where we stand. And then we will glean some words of wisdom from Ann Jones’ follow-up to her convention remarks—an essay that first appeared on *TomDispatch*. —Ed.

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United Nations and Veterans For Peace to Consider International Veterans Conference in 2018

Dear Veterans and Supporters,

As we close out 2016 and move on to new challenges in 2017, once again I want to thank everyone for your dedication to, and strong support for, the work of VFP.

The United States has a new administration in the White House. While domestic and foreign policies of the U.S. will undoubtedly change under the new administration, VFP's

We will continue to stand against war, aggression, and injustice to people and the planet, here at home and abroad.

mission will not. We will continue to stand against war, aggression, and injustice to people and the planet, here at home and abroad.

In pursuit of that mission, VFP is embarking on a new and exciting project this coming year. The VFP Board of Directors is moving forward with a plan to recommend to the United Nations that it sponsor a worldwide veterans conference.

In 2003, VFP member Jozef Hand-Boniakowski was part of a seven-member delegation representing VFP at a U.N. conference on Human Security and Dignity. Jozef wrote a comprehensive report on the conference and proposed that, at the 2004 U.N. conference, VFP present a panel discussion on the possibility of a worldwide veterans peace movement. I am not certain what became of that suggestion, but I can tell you that VFP is working to make this suggestion a reality.

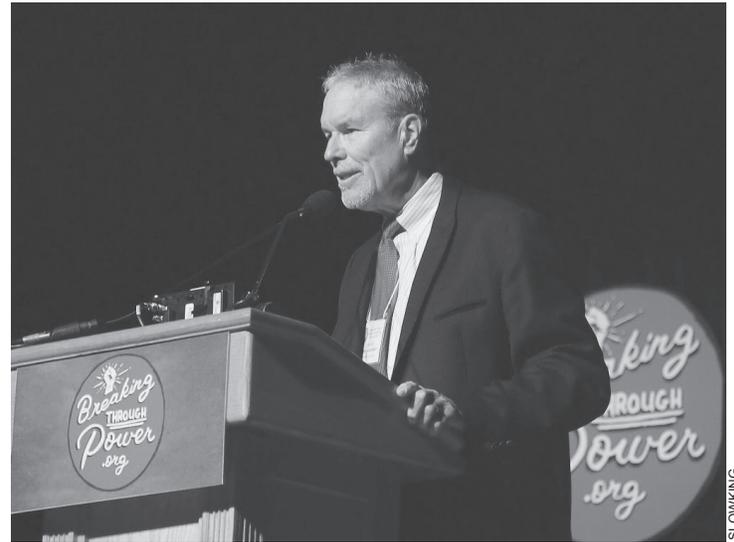
On December 6, 2016, Ann Wright, Ellen Barfield (our senior U.N. representative), Matt Hogan (former U.N. employee), and I met with Bruce Knotts, Chair of the Executive Committee of the Department of Public Information of the U.N. and a former member of the U.S. State Department. We discussed the possibility of a worldwide veterans conference, and identified three areas of interest shared by VFP and the U.N.:

(1) **Abolition of War**—The Preamble to the United Nations Charter calls for an “end to the scourge of war.”

(2) **Nuclear Weapons**—Disarmament and elimination of nuclear weapons has consistently been a major focus of the U.N.

(3) **Climate Change**—The U.N. shares our belief that the impact of training and preparation for war and war itself has a dramatic impact on climate change and damages our planet.

Our proposal calls for a three-day conference, not only to cover these issues, but to discuss the need for alternatives to war and how nonviolence can be a strategy and tactic to successfully bring about a peaceful resolution to conflict. Bruce Knotts found our proposal “spot on” with the mission of the



VFP Board President Barry Ladendorf speaks at Ralph Nader's May 2016 Breaking Through Power conference in Washington, D.C.

U.N., and expressed his desire to help us.

Over the next two years, we will work closely with the U.N. to ensure that we make the best of this historic opportunity to ignite a worldwide veterans peace movement. One of our immediate goals will be to find U.N. member nations to sponsor the conference. Bruce predicted many nations will enthusiastically support our efforts. In an email sent to me after the meeting, Bruce remarked, “*Your authentic message is all you need.*”

A copy of the written proposal to the U.N. will be posted on VFP's website. The Board and staff will provide regular reports to our membership on the progress of the proposal, and will no doubt be reaching out to you for ideas and assistance in making this conference a huge success.

Peace to all!

Barry Ladendorf

President, Board of Directors, Veterans For Peace, Inc.

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THE SECOND COMING

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.
Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: a waste of desert sand;
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Wind shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

—William Butler Yeats (1919)

Indeed. Yeats wrote this poem as WWI was drawing to a close and, prophetically, captured the dark soul of the 20th Century, one of the bloodiest in human history. Now as we stand in the middle of the 21st century's second decade, we may be tempted to absorb Yeats's words wholesale. The center is indeed not holding and something very, very weird is slouching toward Bethlehem. Blood-dimmed tides are/have been loosed, for sure. Yet I am not buying fully into his complaint that "...(t)he best lack all conviction...." All I have to do is

look through the pages of this VFP newsletter to find instance after instance of good people acting from deep conviction and integrity. Just look at the Iraq Water Project or VFP's ongoing participation in the SOA Watch vigils or our members' work battling Islamophobia or our whole-hearted support of Black Lives Matter or the amazing work of a very special band of VFP sisters and brothers who stood/stand shoulder to shoulder with our indigenous brothers and sisters at Standing Rock. And then comb through our chapter reports to find the amazing activism rippling through the national and international federation of chapters that makes up Veterans For Peace. We are doubling down. For world peace. Nothing less.

And, in doing so, we have also avoided the magical thinking that dominates the premises and logical scaffolding of many U.S. citizens' arguments that infused this last political "season." We are not buying into the divisive politics of the two-party system (Frank Zappa: "American politics is the entertainment wing of the military industrial complex") nor are we adopting the apocalyptic dreamscape of the evangelical fringe. We see ourselves as an integral part of a movement for social justice. We are realistically, calmly facing the world as it is and working locally, sometimes regionally, sometimes nationally, and, even, sometimes internationally, to dismantle the militarism that has insinuated itself into every corner of this planet. I am so proud to stand with all of you in Veterans For Peace. Now, more than ever, we must fly our colors as the only veterans organization dedicated to achieving world peace and abolishing war.

—Doug Rawlings, VFP Newsletter Editor

P.S. As one last editorial note, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the good work of Virginia Druhe over the years to lay out and help edit the VFP newsletter. She has moved on to greener pastures. She will be missed. The good news is that VFP associate member Becky Luening has come on board to take up this task. Yet another example of the deep bench VFP has put together over the years. We are truly blessed.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In re: "Thank You For Your Service" [VFP Newsletter, Summer 2016], somehow, I missed my invitation to submit "pithy repartee..."

Responding to the TYFYS accolade with a rejoinder, snappy or otherwise, lets the commenter off the hook. It allows him/her to walk away feeling like they've "done their part." They have regurgitated a programmed, knee-jerk response with no further involvement required; no conscious thought necessary.

Instead, consider responding with: "What do you mean by that?" It's important that the question not be posed confrontationally, but in a manner intended to elicit a thoughtful reply. Many people believe they are saying something good; something we can be proud of. They believe they are recognizing a sacrifice. They are sometimes taken aback and [become]

defensive when confronted with having to justify their remark.

My goal is to engage the commenter in a conversation about what s/he said, and why; to turn it into an opportunity to educate and hopefully bring about an epiphany; a clearer understanding of what military service involved, and for what purpose. I try to weave some of Smedley Butler's quotations into the conversation, to emphasize the point that "we who served" did so, mostly, from a naïve, enculturated perspective.

I can honestly say my interactions have been positive; some more so than others, but positive nonetheless. Regardless of the commenter's response—and if a simple rejoinder is all one can muster under the circumstance—I like to close with: "I would prefer to be thanked for my service to peace!"

Nate Lomba, Humboldt Bay Chapter 56
Charter member, VFP Golden Rule Project

Vets Helped Trump Win and Republicans Retain the House: Now Republicans Push Privatization of the Veterans Administration

Since WWII, Republicans have been arguing it is best to send vets to private hospitals and clinics for care. Republicans have not won on this, until recently, when Senators McCain and Sanders pushed the Choice program (vets living 40-plus miles from a clinic or waiting 30 days or more for an appointment can demand private care).

Though Republicans have not won the privatization battle they and Democrats have been successful in underfunding the VA—disabling the VA from adequate staffing, modernization and expansion of facilities—for most of the last 70 years.

Nearly all America's 22 million veterans have the opportunity to vote.

In the 2014 election, over 54 percent, or nearly 12 million veterans, voted. This is a far higher percentage than the number of non-veterans who voted (41 percent). It is likely that the 12 million vets *and* their 12 million or more voting family members comprised over 26 percent of all the votes cast in 2014! Veterans and their family members count big in American politics.

In 2014, 6 out of 10 veterans voted Republican. Republicans expanded their majority in the House and gained control of the Senate, with the result bringing near political gridlock for the last two years.

What is stunning is that most of those Republican Congressional members are interested in *privatizing* the health care vets receive from VA hospitals across America.

Yet veterans themselves *do not want their VA health care privatized*.

In the 2016 election, again, 6 of 10, or 61 percent of veterans, voted for Trump and Republicans. Vets comprised 13 percent of the vote; possibly 17 million vets voted, and they gave Trump 4 million votes more than Clinton.

If you get care at the VA, and if you're one of the 72 percent of the vets who *like* their VA care, then if you voted for Trump you may have shot yourself in the foot. If you did *not* vote for Trump, that bullet may have come from another vet who did.

Between now and the November 2018 election, when all the House members are up for election again, we in VFP need to fight back. You may join the fight by signing the petition at: <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/we-oppose-va-health-care-privatization>

Privatizers think they can make billions by pushing the 9 million veterans enrolled in VA care into private sector healthcare. Private care costs about 30 percent more than VA care. We are nothing but dollar signs to them (think the Koch brothers and their ilk).

Peace!

Buzz Davis

Chapter 175, Janesville, WI



Ann Jones delivers keynote at the 2016 VFP Convention banquet.

Dr. Jones feared she might be telling VFP members something they already knew when she spoke at the Berkeley convention last summer about the big money right-wingers trying to “reform” the VA, to make money off vets’ health care. Instead, she found that “... vets who had been given vouchers to seek private care—which in every case proved inaccessible or unsatisfactory—told me they had had no idea of the implications of that ‘choice,’ believing it to be just another VA program.

“Nor is this the first time that big money has manipulated veterans’ organizations to serve its interests rather than theirs. Think of the Big Pharma advertising blitz and lobbying of legitimate veterans’ organizations to get them to lobby Congress to pass the bill requiring the VA to evaluate and treat all patients for pain—the bill that brought us the opioid epidemic among veterans and civilians alike.”

The above is from a brief note that Dr. Jones sent as we were putting together this newsletter. Here are some excerpts from her latest essay:

A friend of mine, a Vietnam vet, told me about a veteran of the Iraq War who, when some civilian said, “Thank you for your service,” replied: “I didn’t serve, I was used.” That got me thinking about the many ways today’s veterans are used, conned, and exploited by big gamers right here at home. Near the end of his invaluable book cataloging the long, slow disaster of *America’s War for the Greater Middle East*, historian Andrew Bacevich writes, “Some individuals and institutions actually benefit from an armed conflict that drags on and on. Those benefits are immediate and tangible. They come in the form of profits, jobs, and campaign contributions. For the military-industrial complex and its beneficiaries, perpetual war is not necessarily bad news.”

Bacevich is certainly right about war profiteers, but I believe we have not yet fully wrapped our minds around what that truly means. This is what we have yet to take in: today, the United States is the most unequal country in the developed world, and the wealth of the plutocrats on top is now so great that, when they invest it in politics, it is likely that no elected government can stop them or the lucrative wars and “free markets” they exploit. Among the prime movers in our corporatized politics are undoubtedly the two billionaire Koch brothers, Charles and David, and their cozy network of secret donors. . . . Despite their extreme neo-libertarian goal of demonizing and demolishing government, they reportedly did not hesitate to pocket about \$170 million as contractors for George W. Bush’s wars. They sold fuel (oil is their principal business) to the Defense Department, and after they bought Georgia Pacific, maker of paper products, they supplied that military essential: toilet paper. . . .

It is no secret that the VA was not ready for the endless, explosive post-9/11 wars. Its hospitals were already full of old vets from earlier wars when suddenly, there arrived young men and women with wounds, both physical and mental, the doctors had never seen before. The VA enlarged its hospitals, recruited new staff, and tried to catch up, but it has been running behind ever since. It is no wonder veterans’ organizations keep after the VA (as well they should), demanding more funding and better service. But they have to be careful what they focus on. If they leave it at that and overlook what is really going on—often in plain sight, however disguised in patriotic verbiage—they can wind up being marched down a road they did not choose that leads to a place they do not want to be. Even before the post-9/11 vets came home, drug-making corporations had gone to work on the VA. . . . By the end of 2001, this country was at war, and Big Pharma was looking at a gold mine.

They recruited doctors, set them up in private “Pain Foundations,” and paid them handsomely to give lectures and interviews, write studies and textbooks, teach classes in medical schools, and testify before Congress on the importance of providing our veterans with powerful painkillers. In 2002, the Food and Drug Administration considered restricting the use of opioids, fearing they might be addictive. They were talked out of it by experts such as Dr. Rollin Gallagher of the American Academy of Pain Medicine and board member of the American Pain Foundation, both largely funded by the drug companies. He spoke against restricting OxyContin.

By 2008, congressional legislation had been written—the Veterans’ Mental Health and Other Care Improvement Act—directing the VA to develop a plan to evaluate all patients for pain. When the VA objected to Congress dictating its medical procedures, Big Pharma launched a “Freedom from Pain” media blitz, enlisting veterans’ organizations to campaign for the bill and get it passed.

Those painkillers were also dispatched to the war zones where our troops were physically breaking down under the

weight of the equipment they carried. By 2010, a third of the Army’s soldiers were on prescription medications—and nearly half of them, 76,500, were on prescription opioids—which proved to be highly addictive, despite the assurance of experts such as Rollin Gallagher. In 2007, for instance, *The American Veterans and Service Members Survival Guide*, distributed by the American Pain Foundation and edited by Gallagher, offered this assurance: “[W]hen used for medical purposes and under the guidance of a skilled health-care provider, the risk of addiction from opioid pain medication is very low.”

By that time, here at home, soldiers and vets were dying at astonishing rates from accidental or deliberate overdoses. Civilian doctors, as well, had been persuaded to overprescribe these

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MIKE HASTIE, ARMY MEDIC VET NAM

drugs, so that by 2011, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced a national epidemic, affecting more than twelve million Americans. In May 2012, the Senate Finance Committee finally initiated an investigation into the perhaps “improper relation” between Big Pharma and the pain foundations. That investigation is still “ongoing,” which means that no information about it can yet be revealed to the public.

Meanwhile, opioid addicts, both veterans and civilians, were discovering that heroin was a cheaper and no less effective way to go. Because heroin is often cut with Fentanyl, a more powerful opioid, however, drug deaths rose dramatically. This epidemic of death is in the news almost every day now as hard-hit cities and states sue the drug makers, but rarely is it traced to its launching pad: the Big Pharma conspiracy to make big

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V.A. Privatization

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bucks off our country's wounded soldiers.

It took the VA far too long to extricate itself from medical policies marketed by Big Pharma and, in effect, prescribed by Congress. It had made the mistake of turning to the Pharma-funded pain foundations in 2004 to select its Deputy National Program Director of Pain Management: the ubiquitous Dr. Gallagher. But when the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency finally laid down new restrictive rules on opioids in 2014, the VA had to comply. That has been hard on the thousands of opioid-dependent vets it had unwittingly hooked, and it is becoming harder as Republicans in Congress move to privatize the VA and send vets out with vouchers to find their own health care. To force the VA to use its drugs, Big Pharma set up dummy foundations and turned to existing veterans' organiza-

These days, the Big Money people have found a more efficient way to make their weight felt. Now, when they need the political clout of a veterans' organization, they help finance one of their own...

tions for support. These days, however, the Big Money people have found a more efficient way to make their weight felt. Now, when they need the political clout of a veterans' organization, they help finance one of their own. Consider Concerned Veterans for America (CVA). The group's stated mission is "to preserve the freedom and prosperity we and our families fought and sacrificed to defend." What patriotic American would not want to get behind that?

The problem that concerns the group right now is the "divide" between civilians and soldiers, which exists, its leaders claim, because responsibility for veterans has been "pushed to the highest levels of government." That has left veterans isolated from their own communities, which should be taking care of them. CVA proposes (though not quite in so many words) to close that gap by sacking the VA and giving vets the "freedom" to find their own health care. The 102-page proposal of CVA's Task Force on "Fixing Veterans' Health Care" would let VA hospitals treat veterans with "service-connected health needs"—let them, that is, sweat the hard stuff—while transforming most VA Health Care facilities into an "independent, non-profit corporation" to be "preserved," if possible, in competition "with private providers." All other vets would have the "option to seek private health coverage," using funds the VA might have spent on their care, had they chosen it. (How that would be calculated remains one of many mysteries.) The venerable VA operates America's largest health-care system, with



MIKE HASTIE, ARMY MEDIC VIETNAM

168 VA Medical Centers and 1,053 outpatient clinics, providing care to more than 8.9 million vets each year. Yet, under this plan, that lame, undernourished but extraordinary and, in a great many ways, remarkably successful version of single-payer lifelong socialized medicine for vets would be a goner, perhaps surviving only in bifurcated form: as an intensive care unit and an insurance office dispensing funds to free and choosy vets. Such plans should have marked CVA as a Koch brothers' creation even before its front man gave the game away and lost his job. Like those pain foundation doctors who became self-anointed opioid experts, veteran Pete Hegseth had made himself an expert on veterans' affairs, running CVA and doubling as a talking head on Fox News. The secretive veterans' organization now carries on without him, still working to capture—or perhaps buy—the hearts and minds of Congress.

And here is the scary part: they may succeed. Remember that every U.S. administration, from the Continental Congress on, has regarded the care of veterans as a sacred trust of government. The notion of privatizing veterans' care—by giving each veteran a voucher, like some underprivileged schoolboy—was first suggested only eight years ago by Arizona Senator John McCain, America's most famous veteran-cum-politician. Most veterans' organizations opposed the idea, citing McCain's long record of voting against funding the VA. Four years ago, Mitt Romney touted the same idea and got the same response. That is about the time that the Koch brothers, and their donor network, changed their strategy. They had invested an estimated \$400 million in the 2012 elections and lost the presidency (though not Congress). So they turned their attention to the states and localities. Somewhere along the way, they quietly promoted CVA and who knows what other similar organizations and think tanks to peddle their cutthroat capitalist ideology and enshrine it in the law of the land. Then, in 2014, President Obama signed into law the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act. That bill singled out certain veterans who lived at least forty miles from a VA hospital or had to wait thirty days for an appointment and gave them a "choice card," entitling them to see a

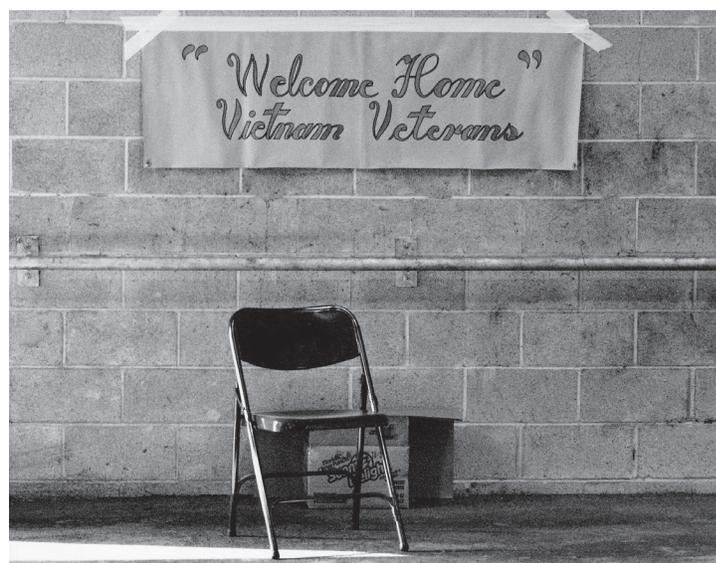
private doctor of their own choosing. Although John McCain had originally designed the bill, it was by then a bipartisan effort, officially introduced by the Democratic senator who chaired the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Bernie Sanders. Sanders said that, while it was not the bill he would have written, he thought it was a step toward cutting wait times. With his sponsorship, the bill passed by a ninety-three to three vote. And so an idea unthinkable only two years earlier—the partial privatization of veterans' health care—became law. How could that have happened? At the VA, there was certainly need for improvement. Its health-care system had been consistently under-funded and wait times for appointments were notoriously long. Then, early in 2014, personnel at the Phoenix VA in McCain's home state of Arizona were caught falsifying records to hide the wait-time problem. When that scandal hit the news, CVA was quick to exploit the situation and lead a mass protest. Three weeks later, as heads rolled at the VA, Senator McCain called a town hall meeting to announce his new bill, with its "hallmark Choice Card." His website notes that it "received praise ... from veterans' advocacy organizations such as Concerned Veterans for America." That bill also called for a "commission on care" to explore the possibilities of "transforming" veterans' health care. Most vets still have not heard of this commission and its charge to change their lives, but many of those who did learn of it were worried by the terminology. After all, many vets already had a choice through Medicare or private insurance, and most chose the vet-centered treatment of the VA. They complained only that it took too long to get an appointment. They wanted more VA care, not less—and they wanted it faster.

In any case, those choice cards already handed out have reportedly only slowed down the process of getting treatment, while the freedom to search for a private doctor has turned out to be anything but popular. Nevertheless, the commission on care—fifteen people chosen by President Obama and the leaders of the House and Senate—worked for ten months to produce a laundry list of "fixes" for the VA and one controversial recommendation. They called for the VA "across the United States" to establish "high-performing, integrated community health care networks, to be known as the VHA Care System." In other words, instead of funding added staff and speeded-up service, the commission recommended the creation of an entirely new, more expensive, and untried system. Then there was the fine print: as in the plan of CVA, there would be tightened qualifications, out-of-pocket costs, and exclusions. In other words, the commission was proposing a fragmented, complicated, and iffy system, funded in part on the backs of veterans, and "transformative" in ways ominously different from anything vets had been promised in the past.

Commissioner Michael Blecker, executive director of the San Francisco-based veterans' service organization Swords to Plowshares, refused to sign off on the report. Although he approved of the VA fixes, he saw in that recommendation for

"community networks" the privatizer's big boot in the door. Yet, while Blecker thought the recommendation would serve the private sector and not the vet, another non-signer took the opposite view. Darin Selnick, senior veterans' affairs advisor for CVA and executive director of CVA's Fixing Veterans Health Care Taskforce, complained that the commission had focused too much on "fixing the existing VA" rather than "boldly transforming" veterans' health care into a menu of "multiple private-sector choice options." The lines were clearly drawn.

Then, last April, Senator McCain made an end run around the commission, a dash that could only thrill the leaders of CVA and their backers. Noting that his choice card legislation was due to expire, McCain, together with seven other Republican senators (including Ted Cruz), introduced new legislation: the Care Veterans Deserve Act of 2016. It is a bill designed to "enhance choice and flexibility in veterans' health care" by making the problematic choice card "permanently and universally" available to all disabled and other unspecified veterans. You can see where the notion came from and where it is going.

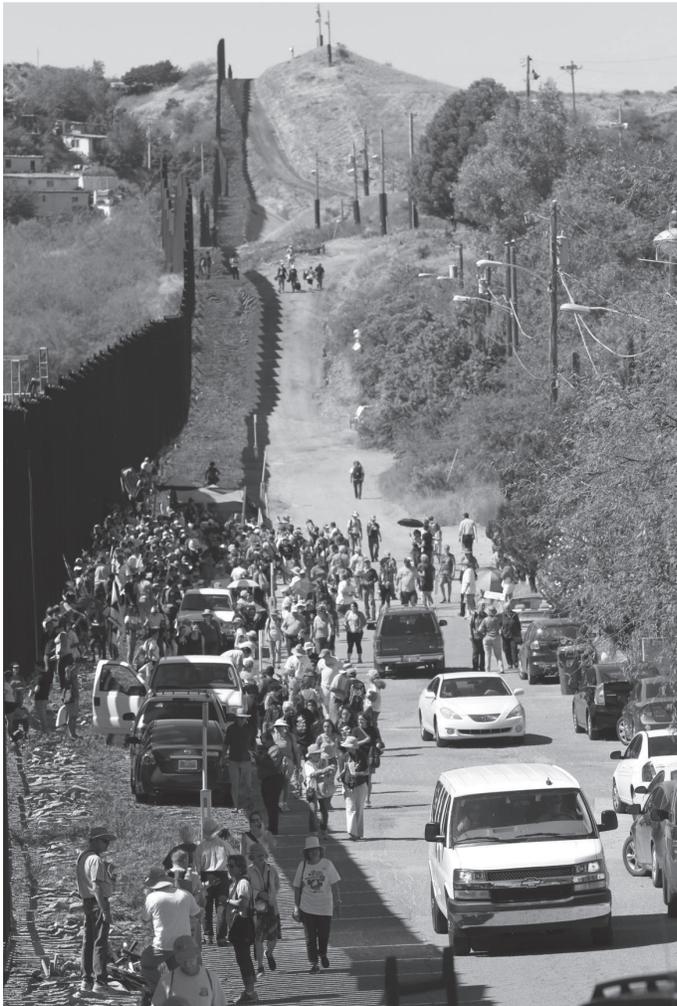


MIKE HASTIE, ARMY MEDIC VIETNAM

By May 2016, when Fox News featured a joint statement by Senator McCain and Pete Hegseth, late of CVA, trumpeting the VA Choice Card Program as "the most significant VA reform in decades," you could also see where this might end.

As real veterans' organizations wise up to what is going on, they will undoubtedly stand against the false "freedom" of a Koch brothers-style "transformation" of the VA system. The rest of us should stand with them. The plutocrats who corrupted veterans' health care and now want to shut it down, and the plutocrats who profit from this country's endless wars, are one and the same. And they have bigger plans for us all.

Ann Jones is an international journalist, photographer, and author of numerous books. She embedded with American troops in Afghanistan and reported on what becomes of them in, They Were Soldiers: How the Wounded Return from America's Wars (2013).



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2016, NOGALES, AZ.—Clockwise from bottom left: (1) After reaching the border, people assemble near the staging area on the north side of the fence. (2) Marchers included many from VFP and the Deported Veterans Support House project. (Veterans not free to cross the border waited to join the marchers that branched off to the Sonoran side of Nogales, where VFP hosted a workshop on the issue of deported veterans later that afternoon.) (3) An impressive massing of VFP flags during the march. (4) With the help of an interpreter, SOAW founder and VFP member Roy Bourgeois speaks to crowds assembled on both sides of the fence. (5) Some of the crosses carried and placed in the chainlink fence during past years' processions at Fort Benning, decorated this fence, in ambos (both) Nogales.

ALL PHOTOS COUTESY OF JONATHAN CLARK AND NOGALES INTERNATIONAL

Veterans For Peace Chapter Reports



#1 - Portland, ME

Busy times for the Tom Sturtevant Chapter. We participated in a Memorial Day Parade and the pace of our group was dictated by a 93-year-old member. Way to go, Victor Skorapa, for completing nearly all the route. We also had a showing in other parades around the 4th of July. We tabled at a Peace Fair, all three days of a huge Organic Country Fair, and at a Social Studies Teachers Conference.

The 5th Maine Peace Walk was held from Oct. 11 to 26. The walk successfully brought to the public's attention the theme of "Stop the War\$ on Mother Earth." We purchased 24 copies of *Letters to the Wall*, and have donated nearly all to various people and groups.

We lined the sidewalk with many VFP flags at the Armistice Day Parade in Portland. Peggy Akers was profiled in the local paper for being a nurse in Vietnam and her move to become an activist for peace.

The "Zumwalt 12" are likely to go to a jury trial in January. These brave souls were arrested for sitting in the street to protest the Zumwalt destroyer being built at Bath Iron Works.

On November 30, 2016, Chapter 1 members presented a check to Sherri Mitchell and Chief Francis of the Penobscot Indian Nation. Our support to them for the Standing Rock Sioux Nation was timely, as tribal members were returning there again with a convoy of many needed supplies.

—Richard Clement



#9 - Eastern MA

We've had a busy fall starting with our marching in a windy and rainy Honk Parade in Cambridge when we along with our Leftist Marching Band and other bands that support progressive movements from all around the country as well as some from foreign lands gather during Octoberfest to hoot, holler and celebrate our collective movement. Following this a number of our members



Smedley Butler Brigade troops charge down the Boston City Hall stairs, preceded by the Leftist Marching Band, on their way to the Samuel Adams monument where the chapter's Armistice Day ceremony was held.

joined with our Maine VFP comrades in their annual long distance march from mountains to the sea publicizing the need for our military to stop the killing and exploitation of everything that's about the sea or seaworthy. Next was our annual Armistice Day march and ceremony where we follow the official Boston Parade (we're not permitted in the official parade because of our name) and then proceed to the Sam Adams monument near City Hall where we have a solemn program recognizing the true meaning of Armistice Day. We filled out the year with several members, including our chapter coordinator, going to Standing Rock, ND to support our native brothers and sisters in their battle to stop the black snake that threatens their water supply, never mind their sovereignty and way of life. "Water is Life."

—Jeff Brummer



#21 - New Jersey

New Jersey's Chapter 21 is proud to announce that four of its members, Jan Barry, Jim Fallon, Walt Nygard, and Frank Wagner, recently had their art work displayed at the City Hall Art Show in Jersey City as well as at the Hudson County Art Show, both in conjunction with the Jersey City 2nd Annual Parade of Veterans and Heroes

this past November. We are also proud to announce that Jim Fallon's piece, "Orphan's Opus '68," was awarded Best in Show at this fall's 50th Annual NJ Senior Citizens Art Show. This particular piece was also honored with a gold medal at the 2015 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival in North Carolina. The works of all of our members were produced through Combat Paper, a paper-making process which involves the deconstruction and reconstruction of military uniforms into handmade paper then used by the veterans to communicate their stories through art and literature. Our warmest congrats to all!

Chapter 21 has joined with grassroots organizations and individuals in the Latino, Filipino, peace and water protector communities to form the Jersey City People's Alliance. It focuses on solidarity with people of color and with immigrants dealing with housing issues and the Pentagon Budget.

Many of our members took part in Armistice Day activities in Jersey City as well as in New York City.

We are also very proud of member Jules Orkin who recently returned from North Dakota where he lent his support to the water protectors at Standing Rock.

—Wendy Fisher



#25 - Madison, WI

The pinnacle of the Clarence Kailin Chapter's yearly public education campaign comes in our Memorial Mile of grave markers representing U.S. military members killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. We get a great deal of public attention for the long row of markers which remind the public on the cost of war. The event requires year-round planning and members of this committee have been busy checking the markers and getting the permits. In November, we lent the markers to a group from Dekalb University in Illinois to bring attention to gun violence in Chicago. Along with planning for the Memorial Mile, planning for the Memorial Day Peace Rally has begun as well.

Chapter Reports *continued*

#25 Madison, WI – cont'd

Member Lincoln Grahlf has been hard at work bringing attention to the Atomic Veterans Compensation Bill and a push to have July 16 declared National Atomic Veterans Day. Through his efforts, the Dane County Board of Supervisors have passed a resolution declaring July 16 as Atomic Veterans Recognition Day in Dane County.

Work continues by members David Giffey, helped by Randy Converse and Jeff Froh, in Truth in Recruiting in area high schools. The Chapter 25 scholarship program is accepting peace essays for next year's scholarship awards.

The backbone of our fundraising continues to be direct appeal letters put out through the dedication of Paul McMahan, and tabling at local events done mainly by Steve Books. We had a great time at a benefit night at Panera Bread and anxiously wait to hear of its financial success.

—Fran Wiedenhoef



#26 - Chicago, IL

Things are happening in Chicago. The main focus of the Chapter is to generate dialogue about the negative effects of militarization on youth, culture and the environment. The most direct avenue to approach this issue is the Chicago Public School system with over 10K youth enrolled in some form of military training. We have recently raised the issue of the federally mandated Common Core that requires the presentation of both sides of an issue so students can develop their critical thinking skills. We are working with CPS to speak to every Cadet and JROTC class and every military school about the “other side” of being in the military.

Our other activities include: sending members to Standing Rock; workshops and tabling with Teachers For Social Justice; supporting Black Lives Matter; supporting Colin Kaepernick's position on racism; talks at community events, colleges and schools; writing letters to the editor of local papers and publishing



Members of Chapter 34 march up 5th Avenue in New York City on Armistice Day.

articles for national media; using social media. Check us out on Twitter and Facebook—DeMilitarizeCPS and Chapter news on Facebook—ChicagoVFP.

In addition, Chicago is the site for the 2017 International Convention and we're on a steep learning curve with the clock running. The dates are August 9–13. It will be at an excellent location right in the loop. Any and all help will be greatly appreciated.

—Army Stieber



#34 - New York, NY

The Kaufman/Pahios Chapter 34 meetings include guest speakers regarding peace and social justice issues: Ellis Maxwell and Guzal Latypova talked about the Coming Home Project; Joe Jamison reported back from a U.S. Peace Council Syria Trip; and Tran To Nga informed us of the lawsuit against 26 chemical companies involved in Agent Orange/dioxin manufacture. Two meetings regarding obtaining justice for Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange were videotaped for Vietnam TV programs.

October actions included: Nodutdol Candlelight Vigil to stop THAAD deployment in South Korea (10/21); Afghanistan War 15th Anniversary demo at Times Square Recruiting Station (10/7); Phil Josselyn's attendance at SOA

Watch convergence at Mexican border in Nogales, Arizona, U.S./Sonora, Mexico (10/7–10/10); and USLAW forum on Labor, Islam, and War (10/17).

In November: We held a Pre-Election Anti-War Rally in Brooklyn (11/5); an 80-strong contingent of Veterans For Peace with bagpipers marched up Fifth Avenue in NYC Armistice Day Parade, distributed flyers and received a great reception (11/11); we attended premieres of “Disturbing the Peace” and “National Bird,” followed by Q&A with film subjects (11/11); conducted counter-recruitment at high school parent-teacher night (11/17).

Tom Fasy spoke about ongoing health crises at the Tribunal on Iraq War in D.C., December 1–2. Also in December: members rallied and marched for launch of Community Defense and Hate-Free Zone in Queens (12/2); attended a Hands off Syria Coalition panel discussion featuring two journalists recently in Aleppo (12/2); took part in Mannequin Freeze Flash Mob #NoDAPL, in Grand Central Terminal (12/4); participated in “Standing with Veterans & Standing Rock” Demo and March (12/4); and enjoyed great music, poetry, and dancing with 85 attendees at our Chapter 34 Holiday Party.

—Bob Keilbach

#41 - Cape Code, MA

In September, we strengthened our link with the Cape and Islands Suicide Prevention Coalition in a ribbon ceremony as part of World Suicide Prevention Awareness Day. We memorialized Cpl. Jeffrey M. Lucey and other vets who have taken their lives as the result of the hidden wounds of war.

In October, we participated with the Cape and Islands Veterans Outreach Center and local police in a workshop on “Police Response to Veterans in Crisis,” the first of its kind on the Cape.

In November, we participated in the Veterans Day Parade in Hyannis. Second grader Nicolas Barcelo, one of the award winners in the chapter’s annual Voices of Peace Poetry Contest, read his poem, “My Dad is Fighting for Peace,” at a ceremony after the march. Hundreds of veterans were there, representing service during World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

Several poems written by our young poets were included in a week-long “Military, Veteran and Community Art Project,” where young school students interviewed veterans and then created art in response to their stories. A culminating, closing event at the Barnstable Municipal Airport was well attended by the community.

In December, we finalized our poetry contest plans: From January through April, hundreds of young students and adults across the Cape will submit “Voices of Peace” poems. The awards ceremony will be in April, National Poetry Month.



Members of Chapter 41 pose with Voices of Peace poetry contest winner, second grader Nicolas Barcelo, and his father (both in camo).

We are talking with other peace and justice groups, including our WILPF branch, about collaborating on a public film event. We want to welcome in the Trump administration with clear and strong voices and action for peace and for justice—at home and around the world.

—Duke Ellis

#46 - Monterey, CA

On December 6, 2016, Monterey Chapter 46 remembered the Christmas Truce of 1914 with a social and educational gathering at a local restaurant for members, family, and friends of VFP. Chapter 46 will host similar educational events in 2017, promoting peace and exposing the true costs of war.

We produced a 20-minute video of a presentation about the Christmas Truce of 1914, and put it up on YouTube: <http://youtu.be/kYwKD2dc33A>.

Here is a synopsis of this great story: In December 1914, German soldiers came out of their trenches on the Western Front to greet fellow soldiers from England and France in “no-man’s land.” They had much in common; many had traveled to each other’s countries and could speak each other’s languages.

For a few days, more than 100,000 soldiers ceased fire to exchange gifts, chocolates, cigarettes, and show each other family pictures. They played volleyball and soccer together, lit candles around the trenches, and sang carols around improvised Christmas trees. The fraternization gave soldiers time to remove wounded and dead comrades from the battlefield.

The spontaneous celebration stunned military commanders and captivated the world. Headlines celebrated the camaraderie of courageous soldiers who days before had been killing each other. In the midst of a war—which became known as the Great War and The War to End All Wars—common soldiers showed their humanity and respect for their foes. Why were their political and military leaders ordering them to kill each other?

—Jack Erickson

#55 - Santa Fe, NM

It’s been a busy quarter for the Joan Duffy Chapter. In September, Ken Mayers represented the chapter as part of the VFP delegation to Okinawa, supporting the resistance to continued base expansion there. In October, several members journeyed to Nogales, Arizona/Sonora for the annual SOA Watch protest. In November, the chapter walked in the Veterans Day Parade, carrying a banner that said, “Veterans For Peace Observe Armistice Day!” That night we sponsored an Armistice Day showing of Steve Jimenez’s Emmy Award-winning *Yearbook: The Class of ’65*, about Philadelphia’s Edison High School, which had more KIAs in Vietnam than any other school in the country. On “Black Friday,” members of the chapter supported informational picketing of Staples and Best Buy as part of a national “Don’t Buy HP” campaign led by the U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights in support of the BDS movement. In December, while both Ken Mayers and Jonathan Engle were at Standing Rock, the chapter cosponsored a supporting action in Santa Fe that drew several hundred, first to the national cemetery to support the Veterans Stand for Standing Rock, then to the Wells Fargo Bank to protest their funding of the DAPL.

—Ken Mayers

#63 - Albuquerque, NM

Representatives of Chapter 63 attended the convocations at Nogales and Standing Rock.

VFP National Board member Monique Salhib rang the bell eleven times at eleven o’clock at the Armistice Day (Veterans Day) observance at the New Mexico State Veterans Park on November 11, 2016.

We are sending greetings of solidarity to the members of the local mosque.

We are looking forward to the VFP National Board meeting, which will be held in Albuquerque in January.

—Sally-Alice Thompson

Chapter Reports *continued*

#69 - San Francisco, CA

Three members of Ch. 69, Margo Schueler, Paul Cox, and Denny Riley, drove to Standing Rock Sioux Reservation to stand with the native people against the black snake, the Dakota Access Pipeline, the latest confrontation between native people and the war against them begun over five hundred years ago by European invaders, a war so unevenly matched it quickly became a genocide, effectively permitting the land grab of what we now call the United States of America. Elders of the Lakota Sioux led this peaceful movement against DAPL.

At an orientation on our first morning at Oceti Sacowin camp north of the reservation we were told everything we do that day will spring from prayer. Oceti Sacowin was a spiritual gathering, everyone was involved in a ceremonial prayer, prayer as protest, and if we wanted something different than prayer when we came here, we should leave. This is about one spirit, one love, one race. Listen and learn. Step back, breathe, a truth may come. A tribal elder told us that as soon as we use violence we lose. There have been so many wrongs but no apology will ever be given. We have to learn to forgive. There are two choices: Don't forgive and we ruin our lives; forgive and we grow.

It isn't over. With 3.8 billion dollars behind it, the DAPL isn't going away easily. And there is the Sabal pipeline in Florida, and the coal terminal proposed for Cherry Point.

—Denny Riley

#72 - Portland, OR

Five members of VFP 72 tabled at the *Northwest Conference on Teaching for Social Justice*, held in Portland in October. The grassroots conference, sponsored by *Rethinking Schools*, featured 70 workshops and drew over 1,300 teachers. Retired teacher, WWII vet Will Pool was one of our tablers.

Attendees of the Berkeley convention may remember Mike Hastie's campaign

to restore the mural at the My Lai massacre site in Vietnam. On December 26, chapter treasurer, Bob Projansky, wrote: "Hi Mike and VFP72, You will be pleased to know that with a \$100 check I received in the mail Saturday, we shot past the \$8,400 mark..., *double* our goal for restoring the My Lai mural. Happy holidays all!"—Bob

Malcolm Chaddock and Dan Shea continue to actively support Black Lives Matter and Standing Rock locally; Dan has interviewed people from both movements on his *VFP Forum* TV show.

Bo Boudart's documentary, *Paying the Price for Peace*, about Brian Willson, continues to be screened around the country, and is an official selection of American Insight's Free Speech Film Festival.

VFP Chapter 72 hosted an Armistice Day ritual at Pioneer Courthouse Square, downtown ringing of bells at 11am, followed by brief, informal passing of the mic. Some of the 50 attendees appeared to be seeking comfort in community, after the turnout of the presidential election.

Our Peace Park garden is looking somewhat neglected, due partly to epic rains on the day of our last scheduled work party. We hope to commence twice monthly work parties in spring.

—Becky Luening

#89 - Nashville, TN

Chapter 89 has been designated by the Metro Nashville Public Schools as a "partner" in counseling students who are considering military service, to ensure that students receive balanced information upon which to base enlistment decisions.

At Fall College Night for Metro H.S. students, we provided information to over 50 students on all aspects of the recruitment process, their rights, and questions to ask during recruitment interviews. We encouraged students to examine their values, and provided information on non-military service options. Students and their parents were gener-

ally very receptive. We will continue to arrange campus visits during career fairs and other events where military recruiters are present.

We continue to combat Islamophobia in different ways, including participating in a meet-and-greet and sharing time at the Islamic Center of Tennessee, and broadcasting interviews with local Muslim community members on our community radio program, Veterans For Peace Radio Hour. With the election of demagogue Donald Trump as President, the Nashville community has begun to explore more ways to support our large immigrant and Muslim populations.

We joined the Nashville Veterans Day Parade displaying the Armistice Day Resolution of 1938, "...to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations." To our happy surprise, the reviewing stand announcer read the words aloud! We were honored to be joined by 92-year-old WWII veteran Hector Black.

Michael August and his partner Nell Levine, a.k.a. Shelby Bottom Duo, celebrated the release of the CD, *Joe Hill Roadshow*. They are taking their act on the road to spread their pro-labor energy across Tennessee.

—Harvey Bennett



Ch. 92's Catherine Pottinger with Golden Rule at Lake Union Wooden Boats Festival

#92 - Seattle, WA

Chapter 92 participated in the Seattle Pride parade on June 26, 2016 for the fourth straight year.

The Chapter sponsored several appearances of the historic Golden Rule sailboat at the annual Seattle Seafair, including the 40th annual Lake Union Wooden Boats festival July 2–4, and

other places around Puget Sound.

We marched in the Auburn, Washington Veterans Day Parade for the tenth straight year on Nov. 8, wearing special commemorative t-shirts. Afterward, we had our fourth annual Armistice Day luncheon at St. Matthew Church.

We commemorated Armistice Day Nov. 11 with our third annual bell-ringing at St. James Cathedral. Afterward, we went to City Hall and joined Seattle City Councilmember Kshama Sawant's rally for 1,000 homes for the homeless, including homeless military veterans.

—Keith Orchard



Ann Arbor: A cross for each Michigan service member killed in Afghanistan or Iraq.

#93 - So. Central MI

This year's John Lennon Peace Concert on October 7, 2016 was the most financially successful yet of nine annual productions, netting over \$2,500. Proceeds are used to assist peace scholars at Wayne State University and Michigan State University, both of which have peace studies programs.

One of the two current scholars—both of whom are women—attended and spoke at the concert, so that attendees could see for themselves where funds are used. Many local musicians contributed their services, including long-time MC and honorary Chapter member Chris Buhalis.

The Concert is always scheduled as close as possible to Lennon's birthday, October 9, and features peace-related



Emmanuel Jal and Thunder Mountain High School exchange student Mahmoud Abu Aisha appeared on stage together in Juneau, Alaska.

music including Lennon's "Imagine" sung by cast and audience.

On Veterans Day, the Chapter put up crosses in Veterans Memorial Park, Ann Arbor, for each Michigan service person killed in Afghanistan and Iraq, and interacted with visitors, one of whom was a doctor suffering with multiple myeloma (bone cancer) due to his exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam.

In January, members Bob Krzewinski and Bill Shea return to Eastern Michigan University to take part in Martin Luther King Day observances, speaking on King as a peace activist. For the first time, they will also present at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

—Lynn Gilbert

#99 - Asheville, NC

Members of Chapter 99 continue holding our weekly peace vigil every Tuesday afternoon at the crossroads of downtown Asheville, encouraging motorists to "Honk for Peace," and hearing ever more urgency and support with every passing week. The vigil, held continuously since the impending invasion of Iraq in 2003, is a fixture of commitment and action to the cause of peace and justice at home and abroad.

In early November, VFP and the Western North Carolina Physicians

for Social Responsibility partnered in focusing on the threat of nuclear war by tabling and demonstrating during Mountain Moral Monday, featuring the Reverend William Barber as keynote speaker, and during our weekly vigil the following day.

On Sun., Dec. 4, our chapter participated in a community protest of DAPL and in support of the Oceti Sacowin while, as veterans, were asked to lead the march through Asheville timed to coincide with the convergence of veterans at Standing Rock. We have also partially funded the efforts of one of our members, Ken Ashe, as he hauled over seven cords of firewood to Standing Rock.

This past September new chapter officers were either elected or affirmed in their continuing roles. Utmost respect and gratitude goes to Lyle Petersen for serving VFP Chapter 99 in one officer role or another continuously since 1993!

—Gerry Werhan

#100 - Juneau, AK

When international peace activist, hip hop and rap musician Emmanuel Jal visited Alaska in late October 2016, his presentation was wildly received by over a thousand Juneau High School students. His stories and music delivered a message of peace, forgiveness, getting

Chapter Reports *continued*

#100, Juneau, AK – cont'd

an education, and giving back to your community—no matter the failures and obstacles.

Emmanuel Jal tells an inspiring story of survival. As a Sudanese “child soldier” from age 8 through 11, he endured unimaginable violence, starvation, and a three-month desert escape. What had become a sectarian war between Muslims and Christians evolved into an all-out civil war that exploded the level of violence.

Jal’s advice to the students was to fail—because failure had taught him the path to success and that one must never give up.

Jal became interested in coming to Alaska after Rich Moniak interviewed him by phone on “Juneau’s Peace Talk,” VFP’s monthly radio program. He was especially intrigued by the Juneau chapter’s annual scholarship for high school seniors, for essays written on the meaning of a song with a peace, nonviolence or antiwar theme.

—KJ Metcalf



COURTESY JOHN HENDRICKS PHOTOGRAPHY

Nov. 18, 2016: VFP Exec. Dir. Michael McPhearson and Ch. 104 President Lynn Kinkade present the Gary E. May Peace Scholarship to Addison Paul in Evansville.

#104 - Evansville, IN

On September 5, 2016, Chapter 104 members took a message of peace to the community as we marched in the tri-state area’s 130th annual Labor Day parade in Boonville, Indiana. On October 19, we set up a refreshment stand outside the local VA Clinic, serving hot dogs, drinks, and kindness to fellow veterans. For Armistice Day, we gathered with members of the public at the Four



North Texas Chapter 106 sent a contingent to join the SOA Watch actions held in early October on both sides of the imposing U.S.-Mexico border fence that divides Nogales.

Freedoms Monument in downtown Evansville to share poetry, reflections, and messages of hope. One week later, we held a public presentation of the second annual Gary E. May Peace Scholarship, awarding \$1,000 to Addison Paul for her essay about mankind’s greatest weapon for waging peace. We were honored to have Executive Director Michael McPhearson as our special guest and particularly heartened by his remarks on grasping the possibility of peace as an essential step toward its attainment.

—John Michael O’Leary

#105 - Baltimore, MD

Phil Berrigan Memorial Chapter members participated in the Armistice Day parade in Baltimore, which ended in Memorial Plaza in front of City Hall, and across the street from the War Memorial Building. Madeleine Mysko and Dave Schott, both veteran members and Vietnam-era and Vietnam veterans, held the Chapter banner declaring “Stop the Wars—Stop the Warming—People, Peace and the Planet.”

Tabling at farmers market for 2017 is coming, scheduled for 22 April (Earth Day), 8 July, and 16 September, 0645 to 1200.

As was the case for so many VFP chapters, Chapter 105 contributed support to the Standing Rock movement.

For the twelfth consecutive year, the Phil Berrigan Memorial Chapter will have a permitted contingent in Baltimore’s annual MLK Day parade on 16 January 2017, from 1200 until about 1400. We are a magnet for progressive groups from the Baltimore area to march with like-minded activists.

—Jim Baldrige

#106 - Dallas, TX

VFP 106 has been busy, since September, cosponsoring NoDAPL/TPPL events with the Texas-based Society of Native Nations. We’ve taken the fight to the “head of the snake,” with protests at Energy Transfer Partners (ETP) headquarters, an interfaith prayer rally, and marches to Kelcy Warren’s estate. We’ve joined the Light Brigade to project a huge “#NoDAPL” message on the wall of the ETP building, and bird-dogged Kelcy Warren with ARREST KELCY WARREN in lights at the headquarters, a freeway overpass, and a lavish dinner-and-dancing-under-the-stars fundraiser at Klyde Warren Park, named for his son after Kelcy donated millions to the park

foundation. We helped spell out DUMP KELCY WARREN at a concert by a musician on KW's record label (he did), and joined the nationwide call for actions at ACE ofcs, with a rally, light display of DALLAS FOR STANDING ROCK, and huge march. Most recently, we helped organize simultaneous statewide Wells Fargo divestment actions.

Members protested drones at Raytheon, demonstrated at the Armed Forces Recruiting Station, tabled at the Int'l Peace Day Celebration, attended the annual VFP convention in Berkeley, and marched with VFP and SOA Watch in Nogales. We held a bell-ringing ceremony before marching in the Dallas Veterans Day Parade, passing out hundreds of Armistice Day and Cost of War flyers. We joined the Dallas Peace & Justice Center to host a dinner where Ann spoke to a packed house about the Women's Boat to Gaza and her time at Standing Rock.

—Leslie Harris

#109 - Olympia, WA

SideWalk, G.I. Voice, and the Rachel Corrie Chapter of Veterans For Peace received a donated motorhome for use as a mobile veteran outreach center. Currently, VFP's two independent accredited VA claims agents, Dennis Mills and Mark Fleming, volunteer at SideWalk and G.I. Voice in Olympia to assist homeless veterans in applying for the veteran benefits for which they are entitled.

We are seeking funds to repair and outfit the donated 1992 Four Winds motorhome to become a "Veteran Outreach" mobile platform to reach homeless veterans not able to get to SideWalk. The motorhome will enable Mark and Dennis to conveniently reach out whenever and wherever homeless veterans can be found. Funds will go toward restoring the motorhome to road readiness, and also outfit it with WiFi and cellular capabilities in order to process veteran benefit applications on the spot.

To contribute, make checks payable to Veterans For Peace Chapter 109,

earmark for "VFP109 mobile veterans outreach," and mail to: VFP Chapter 109, 804 Narnia Lane NW, Olympia, WA 98502. Thank you!

—Dennis W. Mills



VFP's Marge Behlen made the front page!

#114 - Sheboygan, WI

Greetings from Wisconsin's east coast. Summer activities began with our participation in the Memorial Day Parade. Eleven of us marched or rode behind a color guard displaying Old Glory and our VFP colors. Mike and Josh, both Coast Guard vets, carried the flags. Our WWII vet, 94-year-old Marge Behlen, wore her VFP garrison cap as she waved to cheering crowds. She wound up on the front page of the next day's newspaper, great PR for our chapter!

Two of us helped out with a Vets Journey Home retreat last May, addressing PTSD issues. In June, we were invited to help staff a beer tent at Locust Street Days, sponsored by Lakefront Brewery of Milwaukee. Thousands of dollars changed hands and several veterans' organizations benefitted from the sales. Our thanks to the folks of Lakefront for their generosity. If you are ever in Milwaukee, try one of their artisan

beers with a nice bratwurst.

All summer long we continued our support of Peace Park Sheboygan. Home Depot once again donated over \$100 worth of flowers to the garden that we promptly planted. One of our associate members, Micheal Slattery, threw his hat in the ring, running for representative of our congressional district. Some of us helped his campaign as individuals, by canvassing, distributing yard signs, etc. He lost the August primary, but it was a great effort just the same!

We ended the season by tabling at Sheboygan's Earthfest gathering, but got rained out. Hope your summer went well, keep the faith!

—Craig Way

#115 - Red Wing, MN

Peacestock: A Gathering for Peace, held July 9 in Red Wing, themed *Terrorism: Definitions, Causes, and Effects*, featured:

Dr. Todd Green is professor of European and American religious history/interfaith dialogue at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa. He also teaches in Europe, serves on the editorial board for the journal *Religions*, and has appeared on CNN, NPR, Al-Jazeera, Reuters. He has written for *The Huffington Post* and authored several books; the most recent, *The Fear of Islam: An Introduction to Islamophobia in the West*.

In *Islamophobia: What Are We Really Afraid Of?* Green outlines three drivers of Islamophobia—political imperialism, ignorance, and insufficient relationship—resulting in opposition to Muslim rights, surveillance, profiling, registration programs, social collapse in the Middle East, and violence against Muslims. Doing nothing means one has chosen sides. We must build individual relationships that recognize commonalities.

Michael German, Brennan Center for Justice's Liberty and National Security Program fellow, served sixteen years as domestic terrorism/covert operations special agent for FBI, until 2004, when he became a whistleblower on FBI

Chapter Reports *continued*

#115 Red Wing, MN – *cont'd*

counterterrorism deficiencies, then joined the ACLU. German speaks publicly and writes, most recently *The Terror Factory: Inside the FBI's Manufactured War on Terrorism*.

With wry humor in *The Failure of Our Counter-Intelligence Discourse*, he discussed the changing, insufficient terrorism definition and the failure of understanding terrorism and its drivers, causing foreign policy failures, tremendous human and economic costs, and resulting in irrational fear of “terrorism”.

Peacestock also featured exhibitors, bell ringing, peace group updates, Andrew Henderson's video on militarized police, Wild Colonial Bhoys band, and a Mexican dinner.

—Emma Onawa



#154 - Fargo, ND

Ron Saeger and David Givers were at Standing Rock Sioux Oceti Sakowan camp on 4 December 2016—the day the Army Corps of Engineers denied the drilling permit and ordered a full Environmental Impact Statement for the Dakota Access Pipeline. We were interviewed by media from around the world, and we told of Veterans For Peace mission of peace and the abolition of war at home and abroad.

The Red River Chapter is reaching out to less-than-honorably discharged veterans and informing them of the opportunity to apply for an upgrade of their status and gain VA benefits. We thank Red Wing VFP Chapter 115 for helping us start this outreach. Contact Bill Habedank for pointers, if you are interested in doing this kind of outreach.

—David Givers



#160 - Hanoi, Viet Nam

The registration deadline has passed for the Hoa Binh Chapter 160's Spring Tour to Viet Nam, very likely our last tour, scheduled for 5–21 March 2017.

Some of the funds donated last year went towards drilling a well for a

minority community near Nha Trang. Such small works can change the life of a village, or a family, or a child. Chapter 160 continues to provide financial support for Project RENEW, a Vietnamese NGO focused on removing unexploded ordnance (UXO) in Quang Tri Province. This small but successful program has saved many lives through educational programs in all local schools, along with removal of UXOs by trained teams.

—Suel Jones



#162 - East Bay, CA

We helped host the VFP Convention in Berkeley in August. Some of us worked on the poetry session and also read poetry. Others facilitated the Homeless Veterans workshop and spoke on the Alternatives to Violence Project in the area.

In November, members gave five presentations in the Alameda County School District to high school classes about military service and the cost of war and alternative opportunities for building peace.

Maurice Martin participated in the Deported Veterans Action in Mexico in October, in concert with the SOA Watch Encuentro at the border wall in Nogales,

Sonora/Arizona. He and other members marched in the San Francisco Veterans Day parade with deported veteran activists from Colorado and Nevada, and they were joined by a group of veterans from UC Berkeley.

For the tenth straight year, one of our members wrote and read a poem at the Armistice Day Vigil at the Crosses of Lafayette in Lafayette, California.

Maurice Martin and David Welsh went to Standing Rock; Maurice served in the medical tent, David on mess duty. These actions cost money, of course, and we all kicked in, but we also would especially like to thank San Francisco Chapter 69 for their financial help and camaraderie.

Chapter 162 is selling VFP license plate frames for \$10, available by mail order. Make checks payable to VFP, Chapter 162—East Bay. Send to: Cathe Norman, 7986 Driftwood Way, Pleasanton, CA 94588.

—Cathe Norman



#168 - Louisville, KY

On November 11, 2016, we participated in the Louisville Veterans Day Parade, carrying a sign remembering Armistice Day. Member Steven Gardiner



Armistice Day 2016, Lower Courthouse Park, Janesville, WI—Ch. 175 set up this display of the names of 134 Wisconsin lost in Iraq and Afghanistan between May 2003 and August 2016.



Aaron Davis, member at large, is involved in a campaign to return bells to the Philippines that were taken as war booty by American troops during the 1901 American-Filipino War.

Butler Brigade of Boston, rang the bell 11 times at 11 a.m., on the plaza of Colorado State University, where Dan Lyons taught philosophy for 34 years. Following the bell ringing, poet and chapter founder Paul Gessler yelled out a poem on the plaza, a la Dan Lyons. It didn't start a flash mob, but it broke through a mythical boundary of some sort.

Member Jim Blok, of Loveland, remained on the plaza with the VFP flag while a small group moved over to the west side of the student center. In the Tom Sutherland Memorial garden, a national roll call of names of all military killed in Afghanistan and Iraq wars went on all day. Chapter 178 member, Vietnam veteran Bill Cobb, took turns with Paul and Travis, reading names in 15-minute segments. It was a successful "foot in the door" for our chapter, at the university and in our local community. We learned later that Jim Blok had engaged with over 150 students and given many of them assignments to wage peace.

On Saturday, Jane Clevenger, Jim Blok, and Paul Gessler walked with George Newell, Joni Clemens, and Travis Weiner in the Denver Veterans Day parade. VFP member and photographer Ted Engelmann, of Denver, was there to catch us with his camera. Thank you to all who participated. Waging peace is a reward in itself.

—Paul Gessler



At Large - Philippines

VFP activist Aaron Davis and Leyte Normal History Professor Dino Amas-cual marched in the 115th Anniversary Commemoration Parade on September 28, 2016 in Balangiga, Samar, Philippines. Both have formed a committee to bring the Balangiga Bells home following the Encounter, during the American-Filipino War, on September 28, 1901. The bells were taken as war booty by American troops. To learn more about our efforts, visit bringthebellshome.com.

—Aaron Davis

participated in London, where he was a keynote speaker at the VFP UK Annual Convention on November 12. We are speaking at public meetings and circulating petitions in the effort to prevent the relocation of the VA Hospital to an inconvenient location, a move the VA is trying to ram down the public's throat.

Second Sunday Anti-War/Peace vigils continue, even though sparsely attended. We have donated items to Standing Rock to show our support of their efforts against DAPL. On October 1, we tabled at the Northern Kentucky annual peace festival where we met other VFP members interested in forming a Northern Kentucky chapter. On September 21, the International Day of Peace, a few of us attended the Author's Forum to hear Sebastian Junger discuss his new book, *Tribe*, which focuses on PTSD.

—Carol Rawert Trainer

names of soldiers from Wisconsin who have been killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. The earliest was from May, 2003; the most recent, August, 2016. Thirteen years of endless war that continues still.

Steve Nelson and Bob Gronko, VFP members from Chicago, warmed up the audience with numerous peace songs. Our speaker was Stanley Campbell, a Vietnam veteran who is now the director of Rockford Urban Ministries in Rockford, Illinois. Stan says, "As a Vietnam veteran, I learned to hate war. I found healing by helping others in the city."

Chapter members Brad Geyer, Lars Prip, and Judith Detert-Moriarty read the 134 names out loud. The program concluded with John Beister, Band Director from Parker High School playing taps. As taps was being played, everyone was reminded to reflect on the greatest cost of war; the cost in human lives.

—Norman Aulabaugh



#175 - Janesville, WI

Our 2016 Armistice Day program was held November 11, 2016 in Lower Courthouse Park in Janesville. We were there all day with a display of the 134



#178 - Northern CO

The Dan Lyons Chapter had a memorable Veterans Day. Travis Weiner of Boulder Chapter 120 and the Smedley

Why Veterans For Peace joined the fight of the Natives at Standing Rock

By *Tarak Kauff*

There are a few major reasons why Veterans For Peace decided to go to Standing Rock and join the struggle. Like many, we care deeply about the environmental degradation of the earth. The corporate fossil fuel industry and corporate capitalism's attitude and practice of seeing the living planet as only a resource to be exploited is, considering all the science on climate change and the advantage of using renewable energy sources, an insane addiction to profit and power over people and the planet. The Water Protectors' courageous resistance at Standing Rock, to this addiction that

is destroying the planet, is something Veterans For Peace supports.

We saw the DAPL pipeline, besides being an affront to the planet, as yet another episode in the 500-year long, ongoing genocidal war on First Nation people. VFP has a commitment to end war as an instrument of national policy. That means to end war in all its horrific and destructive aspects.

We also saw the resistance at Standing Rock as setting an example nationwide, and even worldwide, for powerful, non-violent, even prayerful, resistance. We saw that Indigenous resistance as having a chance, with people united, being

victorious over the enormous combined power of corporate and governmental oppression. This potential victory over the fossil fuel megadeath industry was a critical component for VFP.

Going there meant having the courage to resist potential violence and arrests, but courage comes when you are convinced that you are doing something that is right, that you are united with others in a struggle, not only for the water, but for our very existence on this planet. We all have courage inside, and when you love something, as the native people and many of us non-natives love the living earth, you must protect it. Being brave has nothing to do with it. You are compelled, like a mother to protect her children, to protect that which you love. Courage comes from that love.

The experience of asking for forgiveness was perhaps the most powerful and emotionally moving aspect for many military veterans. It was deeply healing. The willingness to ask for forgiveness for all the past atrocities (and present) was and is essential. After all, many of us veterans are not only part of the dominant, predominantly white Eurocentric society, but have benefited personally from the oppression of others, from the stolen land and resources.

People like myself can say that we personally were not responsible, but we benefited from it and so are connected to it. And yes, there is such a thing as collective memory, responsibility, and guilt.

We, the veterans who were there, needed to experience this healing forgiveness from First Nations people. The tribal leaders emphasized that they would never forget the past, but that forgiveness and love, not hate, was the way forward. Powerful lessons for all of us.

Tarak Kauff served in the U.S. Army as a paratrooper from 1959 to 1962. He is now a member of the national VFP Board of Directors, managing editor of Peace in Our Times, and leader of many VFP truth-seeking delegations and nonviolent direct action campaigns.



Our Victory

By *Alix & Naima - Climbing PoeTree*

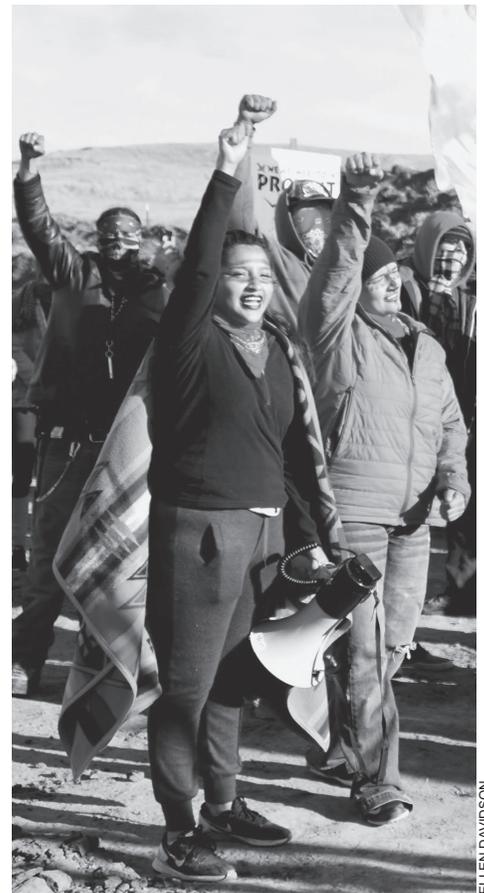
OUR VICTORY is not wholly outlined in Obama's denied easement of construction under Lake Oahe. Our victory is the power of the people expressed. Our victory happened when prayer was centralized as a tool for liberation given the brutal history of First Nation spirituality and colonization across this entire hemisphere. Our victory is people from all walks of life standing together, when historically and culturally they have been separated and othered. Our victory is U.S. veterans prepared to be human shields, ready to stand with civilians to protect the water, facing their own, on the other side of the line. Our victory is hundreds of U.S. veterans knelt down before the Elder Council asking for forgiveness, detailing and taking accountability for generations of violence, and offering their service to the Council.

OUR VICTORY is indigenous peoples from all over the world coming together and creating networks that did not exist before now. Our victory is thousands of individuals withdrawing nearly \$30 million from DAPL-financing banks. Our victory is entire police departments choosing the moral high road and abandoning the posts they were commanded to guard. Our victory is this moment, which will now open an entire volume in our history books to come. It is an imprint onto our collective knowing, and a healing into our collective trauma, and no trump administration, no backdoor deals, no back paddling can ever take that power away. Because we have seen what is possible, and once you see something, you can't un-see it. Standing Rock has taught us that we must love each other into the future.

MIRROR

...hold a mirror to your heart
what does it reflect?
what will be the message
of the legacy we've left?
we were born right now for a reason
we can be whatever we give ourselves the power to be
and right now we need dream-weavers, bridge-builders,
truth-sayers, light-bearers, food-growers, wound-healers,
trail-blazers, life-lovers, peace-makers
give what you most deeply desire to give
every moment you are choosing to live
or you are waiting
why would a flower hesitate to open?
now is the only moment
rain drop let go
become the ocean
possibility is as wide
as the space we create to hold it...

—Alix & Naima - Climbing PoeTree



Native Youth Council members celebrate the nonviolent resistance at Standing Rock on October 10, 2016. Tarak Kauff and Matthew Hoh were among those arrested that day for refusing to leave a tipi upon police orders.

ELLEN DAVIDSON

The Appealing Child



I can hear the complaint already: We've seen this picture time after time in your Iraq Water Project literature. Give us something new.

Yes, there are plenty of other pictures and I should use some. But let's face it: the reason the photo of this appealing little girl is put so often before you in connection with our VFP project is because she is—how else to say it?—appealing. Away with hesitation about using the charms of children to promote a good cause; the advertiser is convinced of his product. Conscience avaunt.

The picture was taken in 2009. The IWP installation team had placed an ultraviolet water sterilizer for these pupils in a school northwest of Baghdad. All of Iraq was still an unstable and dangerous place, even for people like our installers, but alQaida seemed to be coming slowly under control, and IS was

only a dream of merciless fanatics. But look what happened.

There is no way to separate the fate and future of these children from the disastrous legacy of our country's assault upon theirs. Whatever the U.S. intention, we as Veterans For Peace are well aware of the destruction visited upon Iraq and extrapolated throughout the Middle East. "Sorry" just ain't enough.

As recently as last year, IS apparently occupied the Lake Tharthar region, northwest of Baghdad, which is the location of this school. It looks like those fanatics are gone now, but what has happened to that little girl and her classmates is unknown to us. They would be today the perfect age for enslavement if their religious credentials did not match Daesh's standard of acceptance. Or maybe forced brides otherwise.

Members who have followed news of this project (www.iraqwaterproject.org) will know that in the spring of 2011 we lost the installation team that placed the water unit in that school. Under multiple death threats they put down their tools and fled to Europe. The work these men did for us may or may not have had anything to do with the threats, but the effort was risky anyway, and we thank them. **Iraq is still a war zone and all work done there, by IWP or anyone else, is exposed to the violent vagaries of politics and armed confrontation.** We are still engaged with three organizations on the ground in various parts of Iraq to continue the work. Iraqis perform it, we finance it.

It is the sincere hope of the Iraq Water Project committee—and, of course, the people of Iraq who might be served by our effort—that membership will not forget them. Many of us do not look upon IWP as a humanitarian project; we consider it reparation, a tiny drop of payment for a debt our government will never acknowledge, let alone even minimally make good.

The "appealing" child in the photograph stands as well for our appeal to you not to forget. Hopefully all contributions (www.iraqwaterproject.org) will go some way toward a healthier Iraqi child with at least one small thing to smile about.

Prospects for Peace

...continued from page 1

This is a long-standing policy fueled by greed, rabid nationalism and fear. So, on the *Peace Abroad* front, with Trump or Clinton as president, VFP would have plenty of work to do.

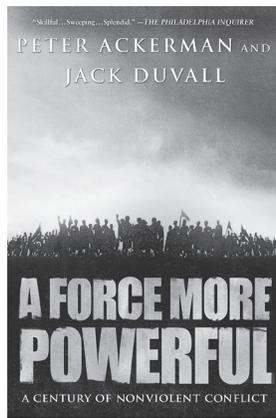
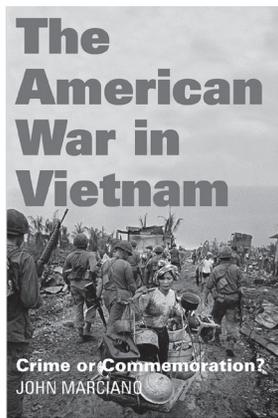
While a Commander-in-chief Trump may bring relief on some war issues, with possible new challenges along with many of the old ones, on the *Peace at Home* front, a President Trump brings a rise in hate and xenophobia not seen in my lifetime. For me, a clear example is the fact that the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan have featured an image of Trump

on their website and they defend his policies. The group is based in my home state of North Carolina. On December 3rd, they staged a short victory parade drive through Roxboro, NC.

There has been a rise in hate crimes and incidents of intolerance since Trump has been elected. He has shown that he does not intend to create an environment of inclusiveness and tolerance when it is most needed. After a deadly killing spree in which a man used a truck to hit people in Berlin, Germany, instead of calling for unity and waiting to understand the full circumstances of the crime, Trump made claims that, "Islamist terrorists continually slaughter Chris-

tians in their communities and places of worship as part of their global jihad." He went on to say, "These terrorists and their regional and worldwide networks must be eradicated from the face of the earth." Never mind that more Muslims have been killed by acts of terror than Christians, or that the U.S. has killed more Muslims directly or indirectly than ISIL or al Qaeda combined.

And, as we look forward to the next four years, we must ask, how will a Trump presidency address challenges faced by half the world's population—women? Trump has been incredibly disrespectful to so many women, and made disgusting claims of having participated



BOOK REVIEW

The American War in Vietnam: Crime or Commemoration?
John Marciano (paperback 2016)

By Doug Rawlings

Howie Machtinger, who is the driving force behind VFP's "Vietnam Full Disclosure" movement, calls John Marciano's new book "our" book. And rightfully so. *The American War in Vietnam: Crime or Commemoration?* (Monthly Review Press) couldn't have come out at a better time, as our country is being led down yet another rosy path. In case you haven't heard, The Pentagon is scrambling to string out a decade of "commemorations" of the American War in Vietnam. We are convinced that they are designed to mythologize the war and, consequently, justify it. Fortunately, Marciano provides us with a powerful counterweight to such foolishness that we can offer up to our children and grandchildren. Or, better yet, to our high school and college libraries. Marciano: "Clearly the National Security State is attempting to win on the field of American memory what was lost on the battlefield. Since the struggle for memory shapes our future choices, it is important that peace activists engage in this debate wherever possible."

Marciano, who is a Professor Emeritus at SUNY Cortland and a long-time antiwar and social justice activist, is a gifted writer. You can approach his book purely as an exercise in research, since it yields many valuable nuggets of

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FILM REVIEW

A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict
Steve York (1999)

By Doug Rawlings

As we prepare to enter the dark ages, many of us elders are encouraging younger people to resist. If you're in that gray-haired camp, then, like me, you might be searching around for effective models to offer younger compatriots. I suggest checking out the 1999 full-length documentary film, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Conflict*, and its accompanying text. The film offers six twenty-minute segments, starting with black college students desegregating Nashville, Tennessee downtown lunch counters in the early '60s (including a brief snippet showing the training they went through); then on to Gandhi's famous "salt march" in the 1930s that used non-cooperation and boycotts and civil disobedience to chip away at the British empire; then to South Africa with a narrative featuring the movement led by Mkhuseleli Jack that used a consumer boycott to weaken the white business community.

These three accounts of non-violent direct action make up what the filmmakers call "Episode One." In a fourteen-week Peace Studies course I taught at the local university campus, each one of these episodes provided an introductory exposure to non-violence that generated some very spirited discussion, especially the Nashville action. Imagine!

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Prospects for Peace

...continued from previous page

in sexual assault. Military sexual trauma, or MST, is an issue that plagues the U.S. military. Can we trust him to even attempt to address the epidemic, much less be effective at it?

What should we do?

Veterans For Peace calls for all of our members and those who believe peace is possible to remember that peace is not found in elections. It is found in the work we do to create it. We must lead with our values, help people envision and believe a peaceful world is possible, and work with people at home and abroad to bring it into fruition.

As we resist current and future wars and militarism and seek justice at home to build peace, much of our work remains the same. We must out organize those who see hate, chaos, and war as means to make money or solve conflicts. However, the current rise in hate calls on us to make meeting and building relationships with new people a top priority. We must put forth greater efforts, at both the local and national level, to reach people beyond the choir, to listen, share, and together build a vision of a peaceful world, and to bring that vision into realization.

I know every year seems an ever more critical time to take steps to head off war and build a peaceful world. But this time something different is in the air. I know I feel more anxious and angry than I have ever felt in my life. I have had to work to keep my eye on peace and not let anger consume me. For me, this is the most important time I have faced to work for peace to keep my humanity and sanity. In the dark times to come, I must keep in sight the fact that peace is possible. Veterans For Peace must be one of the lights in the darkness working for and pointing to peace. We as members of VFP have affirmed our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. Now it is time to do just that!

Power to the Peaceful!

Book: *The American War*

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information, or you can sit back and get caught up in the engaging narrative he weaves for his readers. In either case, the author's powerful voice resonates through the book with one clear theme—the underlying cause of imperial wars like the one in Vietnam rises from what he calls the “Noble Cause principle.” It goes like this: since we have been and are an “... ‘exceptional’ nation chosen to lead the world”(p. 22), it must follow that our wars are driven by a desire to make the world a better place for all. To perpetuate that belief, an intricate structure of myths, half-truths, and outright propaganda campaigns needs to be constructed—“This story can only be believed ... ‘by people sufficiently insulated from the reality of U.S. actions abroad to maintain such illusions’”(p.26).

Of course any writer taking on the American war in Vietnam must leap a formidable hurdle—are you kidding me? Another book on that war? I have to admit that I apply that criterion on a regular basis. Since I directly participated in it, lo, some forty-six years ago, I have read many, many fictional and non-fictional accounts of what went on. So I was unprepared to keep saying to myself, “Whoa, I didn't know that,” or “Damn, I never thought of that,” throughout my reading of this short (160 pages), well-documented gem. Let me give you one example of a fact that surprised me. When asked when the first organized anti-war protest to the Vietnam War was first mounted by U.S. Citizens, I naturally would drift back to the early sixties. Wrong. It was 1945. Sailors from the *USS Stamford Victory* were horrified

to see “...fully armed Japanese soldiers, several weeks after [Victory over Japan] Day, being employed by the British in Vietnam”(p.46). These members of the National Maritime Union protested what Marciano calls a “stunning shift in history—U.S. vessels brought French troops to Vietnam so they could join recently released Japanese troops to support France's attempt to crush the Vietnamese independence movement” (p. 46). Try finding that tidbit in your local school library or on the Pentagon's web page devoted to “commemorating” the war.

Here's another example, in the same vein, but with an added perspective that should warm the hearts of educators—Marciano is clear about whom his audience is, or should be: “Although there is ample coverage of the My Lai massacre, there is not a single word about the massacre committed the very same morning about a mile away, in the hamlet of My Khe.... Why is this related massacre not discussed? Since My Lai has been portrayed as a one-off exception to U.S. policy in Vietnam rather than part of a systematic campaign of terror, a discussion of My Khe and My Lai would help students gain some sense of the overall nature of the terror that was an essential aspect of the American war; it might lead students to probe more critically and deeply into the entire conflict” (p. 154). Exactly.

Please consider getting this book, reading it, and dropping it off in a library of your choice. Of course you might have to order two copies, if you're like me—mine is too marked up and dog-eared for any respectable librarian to accept. Thank you, Dr. Marciano!

Film: *Force More Powerful*

...continued from previous page

College students daring to confront the powers that be and police-encouraged white thugs who beat them up. Still, they persisted. And the closing moments where the young, aspiring activist Diane Nash challenges the city's mayor is worth the price of admission.

The last three segments continued to have an impact: number four captures the courage of young Danish resisters to the Nazis occupying their country, which the filmmakers dub “resistance disguised as collaboration”; number five introduces the students to the Polish solidarity movement during the 1980s that used the union movement to overthrow their government; and number six takes us to Chile in the mid-1980s, as non-violent protests forced General Pinochet to hold a referendum that doomed his repressive regime.

In each segment of this film, students witness the courage of non-violent direct activists, shaking many of their beliefs that “pacifism” is the path of weakness. Whether or not they agree with the motives of the protestors, they cannot challenge their heroic determination and inspirational creativity.

So, imagine this—every VFP chapter purchasing this documentary and the text (which goes into much more detail, as well as expanding the scope of non-violence around the world), and then heading to their local high schools, community colleges, and universities to offer student peace groups a chance to be heartened and emboldened as they confront their very scary futures, alongside “we-who-have-been-there.”

Join us for the 2017

INTERNATIONAL VFP CONVENTION

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Education, not Militarization!

WANT

Baby San wanted horses
mostly, Mustangs and
Appaloosas, a small ranch
outside Tucson with a good
woman and a few sons.

Devil wanted his girlfriend
to take this morning's letter
back, for it to be the way
it was that last night
when she called out his name—

"*Lonnie*"—Lonnie, the name
he had before he left *The
World*. I wanted to finish
school and write about
our days here, this day

and the ones before, us
simmering Spaghetti C's
over heat tabs and drinking
our six free beers in the bunker's
dusty shade, the crackle of

green bullets igniting the air
outside—far away now as we
sat and drank and lied and
killed the day, each of us
wanting what we knew

we couldn't have, till it was
time to go and one by one
we stood up and stepped
through the blinding doorway,
and disappeared into the light.

—rg cantalupo

rg cantalupo was with the 25th Infantry
Division, 1968-69 in Vietnam.



TUZLA

We have to go
through Tuzla,
ten minutes' drive distant.
But the Dutch U.N. sergeant,
looking almost apologetic,
says Tuzla is being shelled.
He shrugs and speaks,
"Wait and see, maybe in an hour.
Have a cup of coffee."
Somebody sniffs. Others shrug.
Tony lights up a cigarette.
We go and find a pool table
in the Dutch bar,
frenetic Euro-techno playing.
I pick to play stripes.
In the corner sits a
battered sculpture of Tito.
On his head he wears
a toy peach-coloured cowboy hat.

—Stuart Laycock

SIGNS

You might long
for something a little cheerier,
like "Roadworks, Long Queues Likely"
or even "M25 Closed, Long Delays"
when, in reality,
road signs flashing past
your (soft-skinned) truck
and (soft-skinned) you
carry captions like
"Danger!
No U.N. soft skin vehicle
beyond this point
without escort.
We care for your security"
or something simpler like just
"Attention Snipers next 2km."

—Stuart Laycock

Stuart Laycock was in Bosnia during the
Bosnian War, as a British civilian aid worker.

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This graphic was developed by United Nations Association-U.K. in celebration of the U.N. Charter. Read more about the U.N. in VFP President Barry Ladendorf's message on page 2.



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