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2013-02: Commemorating the Sesquicentennial of the Emancipation Proclamation

Whereas, 2013 marks the 150th anniversary of the Executive Order issued by our 16th President on 1 January 1863, and

Whereas, the Emancipation Proclamation declared "that all persons held as slaves" within territories rebelling against the United States of America "shall be thence and thenceforward forever free", and

Whereas, one result of the issuance of President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was the passage, two years later, of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution which abolished slavery throughout the entire United States of America;

Therefore Be It Resolved that during and after the sesquicentennial of The Emancipation Proclamation that Veterans For Peace recognizes the immeasurable effect that The Emancipation Proclamation had on American History, and especially on the history of African-Americans, and that Veterans For Peace recommit ourselves to the ongoing struggle to eliminate racism.

Submitted by Bob Keilbach, Chapter 34, 718-358-8568, rakmet@msn.com

Endorsed by VFP Chapter 34

Approved during the 2013 VFP election

2013-04: Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1929 Treaty Outlawing War

Whereas, the Kellogg-Briand Peace treaty, outlawing war was negotiated and agreed to by the United States Secretary of State Frank Kellogg and the French Foreign minister Aristide Briand was initially signed on August 27, 1928, and

Whereas, this treaty was overwhelmingly ratified by the United States Senate with one single no vote and became the law of the land on July 24, 1929, and

Whereas, the former United States Senator and Secretary of State Frank Kellogg's residence is in St. Paul Minnesota and has a major street named after him, and

Whereas, there are adequate convention facilities in St. Paul Minnesota and Monday August 27, 2018 is the 90th anniversary of the signing of the Peace Treaty and could easily lead into the

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celebration of the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice on November 11, 2018 to end World War I;

Therefore Be It Resolved, that the 2013 Veterans For Peace convention go on record urging the members of Veterans For Peace in the Minnesota area to explore provisions for the 2018 National Convention to be held in St. Paul, Minnesota and report to the 2014 convention its progress.

Submitted by Wayne Wittman, Chapter 27, waynecwittman@gmail.com

Approved during the 2013 VFP election

2013-05: Gun Violence

Whereas, often members of Veterans For Peace have often experienced the effects of gun-violence first-hand, and

Whereas, veterans have a special voice in spreading the message of stopping the violence perpetuated by the use of guns;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace urges it's members and Chapters to work to stop gun violence and to support like-minded groups (such as, but not limited to, organizations like the [Brady Campaign](#), the **Coalition to Stop Gun Violence**, the mult-faith **Heeding God's Call** and [Mayors Against Illegal Guns](#)).

Submitted by Rev. John T. Mathison (Former POW Stalag Luft 1), VFP Member-At-Large, jmathison1@earthlink.net

Approved during the 2013 VFP election

2013-06: Legal Challenges To Unlawful Wars

Whereas, James Madison, "Father of the Constitution," said, "The power to declare [initiate] war" ...is fully and exclusively vested in the legislature; the executive has no right, in any case, to decide the question" (1793); and President Thomas Jefferson acknowledged, "Congress alone is constitutionally invested with the power of changing our condition from peace to war" (1805), and

Whereas, Alexander Hamilton wrote that the president's rank of "commander-in-chief of the army and navy" amounts to "nothing more than...first general and admiral," for under the Constitution, Congress declares war and raises and regulates armies and fleets (The Federalist, 69, 1788), and

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Whereas, modern presidents have seized Congress's war power, causing the deaths of millions, including over 100,000 Americans in the armed services, in unconstitutional wars from Korea (1950–1953) to Afghanistan, and

Whereas, President Truman's launching of war in Korea without prior authorization by Congress has been imitated by Presidents Johnson and Nixon in Indochina, Reagan in Latin America, Bush Sr. in Panama, Clinton in Yugoslavia, Bush Jr. in Afghanistan and Iraq, and Obama in Libya, Yemen, and other lands, and

Whereas, Congress never declared war on Afghanistan: its September 14, 2001, resolution mentioned no nation but approved "necessary and appropriate force" against anyone the President determined was connected to 9/11, whereupon George W. Bush attacked Afghanistan; President Barack Obama escalated the conflict, adding many troops; while raids on neighboring Pakistan, begun by Bush, proliferated under Obama, and

Whereas, President Bush Jr. and President Obama violated international laws, including (1) the United Nations Charter, Articles 2 and 33, by failing to seek peaceful solutions to disputes with Afghanistan and other nations and using force against their political independence (2) The Hague Conventions by treacherous and merciless attacks, bombardments of undefended communities and dwellings, and use of poisoned arms; (3) the Geneva Conventions by violent and cruel treatment of those under U.S. control; and (4) customary international law by indiscriminate attacks striking civilians, and

Whereas, in August 1928 the U.S. renounced war as an instrument of national policy through the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact -- a basis for war-crimes trials following World War II -- yet the U.S. commenced war in 2001 admittedly to serve its national policy, and

Whereas, at the end of 2011, President Obama easily withdrew troops illicitly occupying Iraq, but he persists in risking and taking lives in Afghanistan and other countries which, like Iraq, never threatened the U.S., and

Whereas, too many members of Congress, forgetting their oaths to support the Constitution, condone executive wars or even urge the President to launch new wars, e.g. in Iran and Syria, and

Whereas, efforts are underway to contest current U.S. warfare in court: proponents seek an immediate cease-fire and a repudiation of presidential war making -- or at least an awakening of Americans to the issue;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace give moral support and encouragement to efforts to legally challenge unlawful U.S. military actions – notably the action in Afghanistan, and

Be It Further Resolved that concerned chapters or members be advised to contact William J. Creighton, President, Chapter 69, San Francisco, veteransforpeacesf@gmail.com; or the War and Law League, warandlaw@yahoo.com (www.warandlaw.org).

Submitted by William J. Creighton, Chapter 69, veteransforpeacesf@gmail.com

Approved during the 2013 VFP election

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2013-07: Support for Nuclear Weapons Protesters

Whereas, Veterans for Peace's purpose includes increasing public awareness of the costs of war and working to eliminate nuclear weapons, and

Whereas, VFP recognizes the value of nonviolent civil disobedience as a necessary part of the struggle for justice and peace (2007 resolution), and

Whereas, VFP has called for ending the production of nuclear weapons, universal nuclear disarmament, and the complete abolition of nuclear weapons by the year 2020 (resolutions in 2003 and 2011), and

Whereas, the Y-12 Highly-Enriched Uranium Manufacturing Facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and other Federal facilities around the country continue to research and produce the weapons of nuclear war, and

Whereas, three courageous nuclear weapons protesters, calling themselves Transform Now Plowshares, entered the Y-12 facility on July 28, 2012 to increase public awareness of the cost, immorality, and illegality under international law of the U.S nuclear weapons program, and to call for an end to production of nuclear weapons, and

Whereas, the three non-violent protesters, exercising their right to petition the government, have been convicted of sabotage and felony destruction of property facing 10-25 years in prison, and

Whereas, these charges, convictions, and penalties are excessive for the crimes actually committed and therefore unjust, and

Whereas one of the protesters, Greg Boertje-Obed, is a member of Veterans for Peace Chapter 80;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace supports efforts to close the Y-12 Highly-Enriched Uranium Manufacturing Facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee as well as other facilities researching and producing nuclear weapons, and

Be It Further Resolved that Veterans For Peace condemns the prosecution and conviction of peaceful protesters working to close nuclear weapon facilities, and

Be It Further Resolved that Veterans for Peace urges individual members and Chapters to support and promote efforts to have nuclear weapon facility protest convictions overturned, reduced, commuted, pardoned and/or more lenient sentences imposed using petitions, letters to the judge, political pressure and all other appropriate means.

Submitted by Philip Anderson, Chapter 80, 715-372-5004, anderp14@yahoo.com

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2013-08: Oscar Lopez-Rivera Release From Prison

Whereas, Oscar Lopez-Rivera has been jailed in Federal prisons for more than 32 years, 12 of them in solitary confinement, and accused of seditious conspiracy”, robbery, interstate transfer of stolen property and lesser crimes all related to his struggle in favor of Puerto Rico’s independence, and

Whereas, although he was identified as a leader of “Fuerza Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (FALN), a nationalist group held responsible for violent acts in the United States, he was never charged for these and his political acts did not result in hurting or killing anyone, and

Whereas, at age 22, Lopez-Rivera was drafted and served in Vietnam, received the Bronze Star for his service there, and is a lifetime member of Veterans For Peace, and

Whereas, between 1967 and 1980 Lopez-Rivera was a community organizer in Chicago confounding educational/rehabilitation centers and while in prison has helped inmates read and write, and

Whereas, Lopez-Rivera refused a conditional release in 1999 because it excluded other Puerto Rican political prisoners (now free) and has been denied parole in 2010 and 2011 because of his supposedly “deadly criminal acts” which were never proven, and

Whereas, there is an on-going campaign for the release of Lopez-Rivera started by the Puerto-Rican Committee For Human Rights and supported by Puerto Rican Governor Alejandro Garcia-Padilla, Resident Commissioner Pedro Pierluisi, and Members of Congress Luis Gutierrez, Jose Serrano, and Nydia Velazquez;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace supports the release of Oscar Lopez-Rivera and urges its Chapters and members to assist in this effort.

Submitted by Margarita Asencio-Lopez, Associate member, m2al@coqui.net, 787-215-7250

Approved during the 2013 VFP election

2013-11: Korea, Stop The Second U.S. Assault On Jeju Island

Whereas, the volcanic island of Jeju, off the southern coast of Korea, famous for its extraordinary beauty and pristine environment, is a favorite honeymoon destination for newlywed couples and an unparalleled global ecological treasure, with UNESCO World Natural Heritage sites, UNESCO Global Geological Parks, and a designated Global Biosphere Reserve, and

Whereas, Gangjeong Village, on Jeju Island, is home to thousands of species of plants and animals, many of which are endangered, lava rock freshwater tide pools, endangered soft coral reefs, sacred natural sites, and nearly 2,000 indigenous villagers, including farmers, fishermen

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and traditional women divers, that have relied upon the surrounding marine and terrestrial environment for nearly 4000 years, and

Whereas the people of Jeju were subjected in 1948 to one of the most genocidal campaigns of “pacification” in postwar history at the instigation and direction of the US Military Government in Korea, when paramilitary terror, scorched earth policies, forced relocations, mass rapes, massacres, exterminations, and other atrocities killed up to 80,000 civilians (one third of the population) and burned 90% of its villages to the ground, and

Whereas, the US Military has been a continuous and unwanted occupying force on the Korean peninsula in open and blatant contravention of the 1953 Korean Armistice Agreement; imposing its political, economic, cultural, and military will on the Korean people in order to expand U.S. military and economic presence and influence in the region, and

Whereas, the South Korean government has contracted with Samsung, a multinational conglomerate, for the construction of a massive, 50 hectare, deep water military naval installation near Gangjeong Village, designed to house more than 8000 marines, 20 warships, including US Nuclear-armed Aegis Missile Destroyers, as well as US nuclear submarines and aircraft carriers, and

Whereas, according to the Mutual Defense Treaty and the Status of Forces Agreement between South Korea and the United States, the US military retains wartime command over all of South Korea's military, and would therefore obtain operational control of the Gangjeong military facility, and

Whereas, this construction is directly and irreparably harming the biodiversity, culture, economy, and welfare of the village and indigenous villagers by forcing relocation of villagers from their traditional farmlands and denying coastal access to their habitual fishing and diving grounds; and through its destruction of sacred natural sites, burial grounds, soft coral reefs, farmlands, groundwater, ocean water and habitat, soil quality, fishing grounds, and natural springs, and

Whereas overseas military bases are the visible instruments of US militarism, imperialism and the war economy, undermining the lives and livelihoods of local people, imposing a violent culture of commodification and exploitation of women and girls, and creating a “base economy” of prostitution, gendered violence, and “service” industries, and

Whereas, the residents of Gangjeong Village, having voted by a 94% majority to oppose the naval base, have been using every possible democratic and legal means to block construction, including petitions, lawsuits, non-violent civil disobedience, hunger strikes, protests, vigils; risking their lives and personal freedom in the face of overwhelming repression by police and security forces, as well as hired thugs, and

Whereas, the Korean people understand that this deep water Naval Base is designed a key component of Obama's Pacific Pivot, a platform for the projection of US military throughout the region and threatening other regional powers, thus escalating the danger of war and potentially destabilizing the entire Asia-Pacific region, and

Whereas the construction of this naval installation violates every principle and value of our Veterans for Peace mission that includes restraining our government from intervening, overtly or covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations, reducing and ending the arms race, and the abolishment of war as an instrument of foreign policy, and

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Whereas a peace team from Veterans for Peace, sent to Jeju Island as part of the international effort to support local protestors, were refused entry by Korean security officials without cause in March 2012;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace, meeting at its national convention in Madison, Wisconsin in August, 2013, reaffirms our solidarity with the villagers of Gangjeong in their opposition to the construction of this Naval Base and urges the Obama Administration and Congress to stop construction of the Jeju Island Naval Base as a first step toward a lasting peace on the Korean peninsula and East Asia.

Submitted by Eugene Ruyle, Chapter 162, 510-428-1578 (home) 510-332-3865 (cell), cuyleruyle@mac.com

Approved during the 2013 VFP election

2013-12: Declaration of Peace To End The Korean War

Whereas, we observe this year the 60st anniversary of the Korean War Armistice Agreement and the 68th anniversary of the U.S. military occupation of South Korea, and

Whereas, although the Armistice Agreement of 1953 served its purpose of stopping the horrific fighting in Korea with a temporary ceasefire, it is now outdated and remains in a very precarious state due to the numerous violations of the provisions by the main parties to the Agreement, and

Whereas, Article IV, paragraph 60, of the Armistice Agreement recommended “a political conference of a higher level of both sides” to reach “the peaceful settlement of the Korean question”, and

Whereas, the United Nations, in its 1975 General Assembly Resolution 3390B, called upon the real parties to the Korean War Armistice Agreement to “replace” the Armistice with “a peace agreement as a measure to ease tension and maintain and consolidate peace in Korea”, and

Whereas, as a main signatory to the Armistice Agreement, the U.S. government has a legal, moral obligation to end the Korean War officially, to promote further peace, reconciliation, inter-Korean cooperation, and self-determination in Korea, and

Whereas the Korean War was used by the United States government in imposing its longest economic sanctions against another nation, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), from the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 to the present, hindering economic development in North Korea, and

Whereas, the continuing state of war between the United States and DPRK is the root cause of the current military tensions and arms buildups on the Korean Peninsula, and

Whereas, the lingering Korean War has been very costly to the United States, wasting some three trillion dollars of our tax money from 1945 to the present, and

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Whereas, talks concerning disarmament of nuclear weapons or human rights issues in Korea can be more productive after the state of war is terminated between the United States and North Korea, and

Whereas, an official end to the Korean War will serve as a catalyst for a speedy reunion of some ten million divided family members in Korea and abroad, including many Korean Americans, who had been separated due to the war, and

Whereas, an official end to the Korean War will also make it possible for a comprehensive search of some 7,000 missing U.S. soldiers from the Korean War, and

Whereas, the DPRK government had proposed to the United States, from 1974 on, an official end to the Korean War with a peace treaty, and proposed it again on June 16, 2013, and

Whereas, the U.S. government has persistently ignored or refused to negotiate a peace treaty to end the Korean War seriously, in order to maintain its imperial hegemony and military bases in Korea and East Asia, as well as to keep selling its weapons in the area, and

Whereas this arrogant refusal of the U.S. Empire to end the Korean War officially constitutes a gross violation of the Korean people's fundamental rights to peace, human security, freedom, and development, which are well recognized under international law, and

Whereas recognizing the urgent need to end the Korean War finally by American people themselves, and convinced that such an ending will serve the interests of the Korean people, as well as the people of the United States and the world;

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Veterans For Peace (VFP), meeting at its national convention in Madison, Wisconsin, on August 10, 2013,

1) Declares to the world that the Korean War is over as far as VFP is concerned, and that we shall live in permanent peace and friendship with the Korean people, whether they are in or from the southern or northern parts of Korea, and

2) Expresses our deep apology and regrets to the Korean people for the U. S. government's role in the tragic division of Korea, the great destruction and massacre of Korean civilians during the Korean War, the continuing military occupation and control of South Korea, and the persistent refusal to end the Korean War officially, and

3) Urges fellow Americans and other U.S. civil society groups to join this Declaration to end the Forgotten War finally in our own initiative, and reach out to the people in North Korea, in particular, to make peace with them.

Submitted by John Kim, Coordinator - VFP-Korea Peace Campaign, 917-533-9467, kpc@veteransforpeace.org. Cosponsored by Chapter 47.

Approved during the 2013 VFP election