



# VETERANS FOR PEACE NEWS

MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL VETERANS FOR PEACE, CHAPTER 27

Veterans For Peace News is published quarterly by Mpls./St. Paul Veterans For Peace, Chapter 27.

Veterans For Peace works to increase awareness of the costs of war, restrain our government from intervening in the internal affairs of other nations, end the arms race, reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons, seek justice for veterans and victims of war, and abolish war as an instrument of national policy.

We pledge to use democratic and non-violent means to achieve our purpose.

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*"There won't be any trumpets blowing come the Judgement Day — on the bloody morning after, one tin soldier rides away..."*  
(Potter & Lambert)

## When Occupation Becomes Apartheid

by Gil Maguire

Israel's military occupation and control of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza has gone on for more than half a century since it conquered those territories during the Six-Day War. The evidence is overwhelming that Israel created an apartheid system and became an apartheid state at the end of that 1967 war.

Recent investigations and reports from various international human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and Israel's B'Tselem overwhelmingly concluded that Israel is committing the crime of apartheid against the Palestinian people, a war crime and a crime against humanity.

Under international law and Section III of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, a conquering army becomes an occupying power once military operations have ceased. The occupying power has the duty to restore public order and safety and protect the local civilian population. It cannot seize or annex any part of the territory occupied, or forcibly deport civilians (ethnic cleansing), nor can it permanently transfer its own citizens into the occupied territory. It must also relinquish control of the occupied territory and return it to civilian authority and control as soon as reasonably possible once order is restored.

The U.S. conducted one of the most difficult military occupations in history at the end of World War II after it (and its allies) had defeated the combined Axis Powers

of Germany, Italy and Japan. Despite the bitterness of the conflict, the U.S. restored public order and safety and took less than eight years to rebuild the infrastructure and civilian democratic institutions of all three countries and return each to sovereign democratic rule. The U.S. post-World War II occupations are models of how lawful military occupations should be conducted, and today, Germany, Italy and Japan, all former bitter enemies of the U.S., are now healthy, prosperous democracies, and strong allies.

### Ethnic Cleansing and Annexation:

By stark contrast, Israel's military occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza has gone on for over 60 years and defied international law almost from the beginning. Some 300,000 Palestinians fled or were forced to leave their homes during and

*Occupation, cont'd on page 14*



Friend Eric J Garcia on facebook or follow at elmacheteillustrated @instagram.

Artist and veteran Eric Garcia is a member of VFP chapter 27.

# Prez Says . . .

By Dave Logsdon

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“**H**ope” is the thing with feathers  
that perches in the soul,  
and sings the tune without the words,  
and never stops – at all.

—Emily Dickinson

As head cheerleader and self-proclaimed “Schmooser for Peace,” I know that selling peace is tough these days. However, having such a hardworking group of veterans and associates in our local chapter makes it worthwhile. What Michael Orange is doing at the state legislature on the assault weapons ban is fantastic and a game changer. Arlys Herem and Jeff Roy’s tireless work at the national level in the Save Our VA (SOVA) Veterans For Peace (VFP) group is both thankless and essential. Chapter 27’s Vice-President Mike Madden continues to lead the charge for Julian Assange’s fight for freedom. We continue on as a small, but talented bunch who are leveraging our position as peace-loving vets and fellow travelers to change the violent landscape in this world to a more peaceful one. Yes, there is hope.

“**A** little knowledge that acts is worth infinitely more than much knowledge that is idle.”

—Khalil Gibran

Knowledge is of course important, but in these intense times, action is essential. As I write this, women and children in Gaza are being shot, bombed, or starved to death. This is why much of our chapter is focused on this issue and doing what we can to make tomorrow better even if it means doing it brick by brick. Now is an excellent time to get off the bench and be heard otherwise mainstream media (MSM) will win. As most of you probably know, “professional turd polishers” (so to speak) in the U.S. MSM have done an amazing job of polishing turds. Even National Propaganda Radio (NPR) and the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) have danced around the Gaza issue so well that Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers would be proud.

One of the most encouraging aspects of this awful turn of events has been the way young people have not only turned out in the streets, but have organized actions as well. Students for a Democratic Society, Anti-War Committee, IfNotNow and Jewish Voice for Peace along with many others keep planting seeds!

“**T**he most powerful weapon you can be is an instrument of peace.” —Carlos Santana



I’m assuming the quote is from the musician and not the new first baseman for the Twins. In the peace-building part of “Prez Sez,” we must carry on with doing the “For” part of VFP and like I always say — it usually comes down to working with arts, education and media groups to get our messages across like what a big polluter and waste of money war is. While it’s nice to get the golf clubs out in the last week of January, this should scare the living crap out of us. Jimmy Carter installed solar panels on the roof of the White House over 40 years ago and former President Ronnie Raygun (Reagan) took them down when he took office. Just think if our science and technology community had the commitment of the federal government back then where we would be today.

In the year ahead look for us to keep planting plant seeds where we can, share our stories and start fires in those with imaginations. There’s plenty of work to be done and we always welcome new peacemakers.

“**F**ear is real . . . but so is love.”

—Alice Walker

Sometimes a little clarification is needed about some of the positions we take. The USA has political prisoners as well as Russia. For example; Alexandra Skochilenko got seven years in prison for doing something that would

*Prez Says, cont’d on page 3*

# Zionism and Judaism: Is there a difference?

by Sue Ann Martinson

Columbia University in New York City is one place where protests and counter-protests about the Israel-Hamas War/genocide have attracted a lot of media attention. One of the saddest results was to see how vicious the verbal abuse on both sides has been, sometimes morphing into physical abuse including beatings on campus. (1)

The mainstream corporate media likes to sensationalize violence in general and rarely mentions the many peaceful protesters on both sides of an issue. I wonder if some of the younger students who use verbal and physical violence realize they have absorbed Trump's "legacy of hate," now commonplace since his ascension.

The hatred of Palestinians in Israel, propagandized as wanting to kill all Jews, is responsible for cultivating hate as well. This hate language has become even more blatant as Israeli officials continue to make outrageous statements of hate about Palestinians by characterizing them as animals or worse.

Israel has taken the position that it is innocent of any wrongdoing even though at minimum since Nakba in 1948, they have perpetrated an apartheid neo-fascist state with tactics like taking over or destroying Palestinian homes, creating checkpoints that require identity cards, and other methods used by their previous oppressors in Nazi Germany. And now GENOCIDE, as Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) systematically bomb and destroy Gaza where millions of captive Palestinians are denied food, water, medical care and basic human rights while the world looks on in horror as the U.S. keeps giving the Israelis money and weapons.

At Columbia, several professors have written/signed statements with an emphasis on free speech along with a call for free and open dialog on all issues discussed within academic institutions. (2)

However, years ago when foundation funding for higher education slumped, there was a drive to replace college presidents and officials across the country with people who had financial rather than educational backgrounds. This move was common among colleges that considered this was necessary to survive, but now we are seeing the results of what happens when college presidents or other administrators are more concerned with funding than providing the best possible education for students. In fact, they do not appear to understand what is at stake when they take a pro-Israel stance rather than risk offending funders instead of promoting the time-honored traditions of free speech, open debate and dialog.

These officials have not heeded the Christian words: "What you sow, so shall you reap." Or another decidedly Christian point of view, (in spite of the fact that many

Christian fundamentalists support Israel) — perhaps because, they both share the idea that theirs is the one true religion and the Old and New Testaments are inextricably linked: "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's." Christ, after all, drove the money lenders from the temple.

The U.S. is, of course, complicit by sending weapons and money to Israel. Meanwhile, millions of U.S. citizens keep protesting the funding of Israel while their government continues to endorse the Zionist point of view that fits so well with the policies of U.S. imperialism and empire.

## Endnotes

(1) Conroy, J. Oliver, "Walkouts, rallies, clashes: Israel-Gaza 'war of words' roils Columbia University." *The Guardian*, Nov. 9, 2023, <https://bit.ly/4bOGL5E>

(2) Ibid. 2

**Note:** More recent articles regarding the situation at Columbia University are available from *The Guardian* with a search.

*Sue Ann Martinson is an antiwar/propeace activist and publisher and editor of Rise Up Times. She is also a member of Woman Against Military Madness (WAMM) and VFP chapter 27.*

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## Prez Says . . . , from page 2

be a misdemeanor charge here. She put antiwar messages on items in a grocery store. Seven years! Ukrainian peace activist Yuri Sheliashenk has been detained for being an outspoken antiwar advocate and is now a welcome new member of our national VFP advisory board.

Julian Assange, Mumia Abu-Jamal and Leonard Peltier are examples of our own political prisoners. A big shout out to the Russian Museum of Art in Minneapolis for helping to set up correspondence links to anti-war dissidents overseas so like-minded folks here can connect with them.

“War . . . what is good for? . . . absolutely nothing!”  
—Edwin Star

# PBS NewsHour Joins “Public Mobbing” of Julian Assange

*While Mr. Brangham questioned whether Assange is a journalist, his guest, Jamil N. Jaffer, outright denied it saying “Julian Assange is not a real journalist.”*

by Mike Madden

On 20 February 2024, *PBS NewsHour* aired a segment titled “WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange makes last ditch attempt to avoid U.S. extradition.” It functioned less as a report on the legal case than it did as a virtue signal that Julian Assange is a bad man.

The indictment of Julian Assange revolves solely around the 2010–2011 publication of four troves of classified material: The Iraq War Logs, the Afghan War Diary, Cablegate and the Guantanamo Files. Interviewer William Brangham had no interest in the news value of those publications, choosing instead to question at the top of the segment whether Julian Assange is a “journalist and publisher, or something more sinister.” His hatchet job was off to a swinging start.

Julian Assange undeniably engages in journalistic activity — researching and publishing information, and source protection. He has won the prestigious Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism, and a Walkley Award for Excellence in Journalism, Australia’s highest prize. These, and numerous other accolades for Julian Assange, went unmentioned in the 12-minute hit piece.

While Mr. Brangham questioned whether Assange is a journalist, his guest, Jamil N. Jaffer, outright denied it saying “Julian Assange is not a real journalist.” “He doesn’t engage in the normal course of journalistic ethics. He doesn’t redact sources. He doesn’t try to protect the innocent, right?”

An informed response to this statement/question would have been “Wrong.” Unlike *PBS NewsHour*, Julian Assange maintains a most important journalistic ethic — a skeptical attitude toward government claims. Assange did work assiduously at redaction while partnering with other media outlets, as John Goetz of *Der Spiegel* testified during extradition hearings. Moreover, he did try to protect the innocent by calling to warn the State Department when two journalists from *The Guardian* carelessly published an encryption code that allowed the online library Cryptome to obtain and publish the unredacted files for the first time.

Jaffer continued, “all of his disclosures have resulted in more journalists and more human rights activists being under threat than ever before. It’s his disclosures that have put these very people, legitimate journalists, at risk.”

Risk assessment will always be a subjective measure. However, actual harm that occurs as a result of one’s policies and actions can be measured by counting the number of people who die. The Pentagon did such an investigation

into the leaked material provided by PFC Chelsea Manning to WikiLeaks and found that not one single person named in that vast trove was killed.

On the other hand, the Global War on Terror (GWOT) has killed hundreds of thousands of civilians. Jamil N. Jaffer has served in the White House and both houses of Congress as legal counsel on national security matters. In his personal biography, he claims to have lead in “the drafting of the proposed Authorization for the Use of Military Force against ISIS in 2014 and 2015, the AUMF against Syria in 2013, and revisions to the 9/11 AUMF against al Qaeda.”

These authorizations are the legal underpinnings for the GWOT. In his modesty, Mr. Jaffer would surely not take credit for all the carnage, but if one were to create a scorecard of responsibility for civilians killed, Jamil N. Jaffer’s lead over Julian Assange would be insurmountable. Mr. Jaffer repeated another smear when he said “the whole reason Ecuadorian Embassy kicked him out after seven years is, he was behaving poorly while there.”

If anyone would know about the behavior of Julian Assange while at the embassy, it would be Fidel Narvaez, who spent six years in Julian’s company as Consul of Ecuador to London. He described the relationship between Assange and embassy staff as one of “mutual respect,” and added “together we shared countless celebrations, birthdays, farewells, meals, or cups of coffee over which politics and the world’s injustices.”

It was only when Lenin Moreno replaced Rafael Correa as Ecuador’s president in May of 2017 that the situation began to change. President Moreno was seeking closer ties to the United States, and tried to get Assange to leave the embassy voluntarily by making his life difficult. His communication to the outside world was cut off — no internet, phone or social visits and a new company was hired to provide security for the embassy. That company, UC Global, was also in the employ of the CIA and spied on Julian in the most invasive ways. According to Mr. Narvaez, UC Global was “misrepresenting Julian’s behavior,” and based on their reports, “the international media rolled out an aggressive smear campaign.”

Former President Correa said his successor, Lenin Moreno “sold Assange to the United States,” and was “the greatest traitor in Ecuadorian history.” Brangham and Jaffer continued their assault on Julian’s reputation

*Julian Assange, cont’d on page 5*

## Julian Assange, from page 4

by repeating the laziest of canards — that Assange is in league with the Russians. Presenting zero evidence, Jaffer said “it appears that Assange has this somewhat inappropriate relationship with the Russian regime. He seems to be parroting Russian talking points oftentimes.”

To make his point that Assange has “an unhealthy connection to Russia,” Brangham flogged the dead Russiagate horse. In a leading question to Jaffer he said “he basically served as a far-too-willing conduit for those stolen emails back in 2016 from the DNC.”

It mattered not to Brangham that Assange said the emails did not come from Russia, or any other state actor. Assange was to be the subject of vilification, not consultation. Nor did it matter that the issues of 2016 election had nothing whatsoever to do with the indictment and extradition which were the purported topics of the piece.

The most despicable slander of Assange has been the insinuation that he is a rapist. Brangham went there too. “Assange’s legal troubles also include his arrest by British authorities in 2010 after two women in Sweden accused him of rape and sexual assault,” he said. It was not the two women who accused him of rape though, it was the Swedish authorities.

Nils Melzer, the former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture, investigated the Swedish handling of the case. In a letter dated 12 September 2019, he revealed that one of the women, identified as SW, sent text messages during and after her questioning at the police station stating that she only wanted to get Mr. Assange to take an HIV-test, that she did not want to report any criminal offense, but was pressured into doing so by the Swedish police who were “keen to get their hands on him,” and that “it was the police who made up the charges” and that SW refused to sign her statement, suspended her questioning and left the police station as soon as she was informed that the prosecution intended to use her testimony in order to arrest Mr. Assange on suspicion of rape.

Neither did the other woman, identified as AA, intend to report any crime. She went to the police station to support SW in her request to compel Assange to take an HIV-test. In a tweet on 22 April 2013, AA publicly affirmed that she had not been raped.

After noting numerous irregularities in the Swedish investigation that “defeat the presumption of good faith,” Mr. Melzer wrote:

“The medical, factual and circumstantial evidence at my disposal shows that the manner in which Sweden conducted its preliminary investigation against Mr. Assange, including the unrestrained and unqualified dissemination and perpetuation of the ‘rape-suspect’ narrative, was the primary factor that triggered, enabled and encouraged the subsequent campaign of sustained and concerted public



*Twin Cities activists showing support for Julian Assange*

mobbing and judicial persecution against Mr. Assange in various countries, the cumulative effects of which can only be described as psychological torture.”

With Brangham’s ad hominem attack, *PBS NewsHour* has joined in the campaign of public mobbing against Julian Assange. Its propaganda in service of the national security state is as vicious as it is shameful.

A version of this article appeared recently in *LA Progressive*.

*Mike Madden is a veteran of the United States Air Force 1973–78. His service to the country did not begin until he joined Veterans For Peace in 2003. He is currently vice president of VFP chapter 27.*

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# International Law or Lawlessness?

by Paul Schaefer

The Law of Nations began during the mid-eighteenth century in colonial Spain. The argument being that conquering North and South America was legal because Native peoples violated a so-called “right of communication,” that declared the world’s people had a right to trade, persuade, etc. without opposition. And those ‘treacherous foes’ who opposed it, should forfeit their lands, be enslaved, and forced into Christianity.

Later in Euro-history, the Dutch declared that the “High Seas” was an international “free zone” and open to all activities in states as well as private entities. This meant that one nation’s piracy of another’s booty was legal. That was followed by the notion that anyone who conquered territories from non-Christian groups considered “barbarous,” was justified.

The English philosopher Hobbes then argued that because there were too many Europeans, Native peoples should be willing to move into small enclaves and free their lands to be settled by Europeans. This was a version of the Roman concept of terra nullius, or “empty land,” meaning land not used in a way those planning to conquer it deemed appropriate. That spurred an idea for the colonization of any place, anywhere, by anyone with the force and gumption to do it.

The most obvious example was in Australia which to the British, seemed largely uninhabited. More recently, the same principles have been argued inside Israeli courts by those seeking authorization to seize land from Palestinians. The Zionist Jews have long claimed that they (a people without land) came to Palestine, a land without people, conveniently ignoring the several million Arabs already there.

Englishman Jeremy Bentham coined the term “international law” in 1789, during a time of great turmoil in Europe and beyond. The first major treatise on this matter was published in 1836 and authored by an American, Henry Wheaton: *The Elements of International Law* stated that “the public law of nations has always been, and still is, limited to the civilized and Christian people of Europe or to those of European origin.” In accord, the first Institut de Droit International was established in Brussels.

Following WWI, the victor nations of England, France, and the U.S. established The League of Nations in an effort to create a new international body dedicated to “collective security.” Adjunct to the League was a Permanent Court of International Justice. Set up in The Hague in the Netherlands, its task was to invoke “the general principles of law recognized by civilized nations.” “Civilized” is the watchword here.



Paul Schaefer on the job in rural Wisconsin

After WWII, a German, Carl Schmitt, clarified the pretensions inherent in all previous and ongoing versions of international law and argued that these laws were fundamentally discriminatory. The wars waged by dominant powers he thought were “selfless police actions,” but those conducted by anyone else were criminal and violated international law. What they forbade others to do, the powers-that-be reserved the right to do themselves.

The greatest evidence for this is of course the U.S., with its long list of sordid foreign policies from Mexico to the Philippines, the nuclear annihilations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, along with its proxy misadventures in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq: The latest being the astonishing slaughter of over 30,000 Palestinians by the staunch U.S. ally, Israel.

So, the hypocrisy continues and although the U.S. played a major role in establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2002, it never joined it. Moreover, while the purpose of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) is to adjudicate matters between states, the ICC was created to hear complaints for individuals. Unwilling to see American troops or allies facing courts, the U.S. signed over 100 agreements with other nations to prevent them from prosecuting Americans.

And even though most of the world applauds South Africa’s recent petition to the ICJ with clear evidence of Israel’s genocide in Palestine, don’t hold your breath waiting for international law to stop the killing. The Spaniards established that precedent long ago.

*Paul Schaefer USAF 1960–64 is a longtime antiwar activist and an early member of VFP. He lives on a farm in rural Wisconsin.*

# Out of the Mouths of Children . . .

by Josh Ferris

I decided to stop at a freeway banner-action with my daughter Norma on our way home from school recently. It was another international day of action for Julian Assange, and good people in the Twin Cities were gathering over the Aldine Street pedestrian bridge in Saint Paul to hold up signs and a banner for all the rush-hour traffic below on I-94 to see.

I told my daughter that we were going there to support a good cause. As we were walking, she looked up at me with a mischievous grin and asked, “Papa, are we going to a protest?” I said yes, and that we were going there to protest on behalf of a man who was arrested and locked up for telling the truth about war.

She immediately shouted “What, you can’t arrest someone one for telling the truth!” After another moment she added, “People should go to jail for lying.” My 6-year-old daughter gets it: The ongoing persecution of an important journalist is an abomination and an assault on global decency.

It was a nice day and my daughter was happy to mingle with all the people and give them enthusiastic suggestions about how their signs could be better seen by the thousands driving home from work.

*Josh Ferris is a teacher and a former vice president of Veterans For Peace chapter 27.*



*Aaron Bushnell (It is unacceptable to forget him)*

# Some thoughts on a heroic soldier

by Bruce Berry

What do you do when you find out your government is not telling the truth? When Aaron Bushnell found out what the U.S. was doing in Gaza, it was worse than he thought. So much so, he decided to perform an extreme act of civil disobedience to bring global attention to it.

His courage and convictions to his country (or world for that matter) as an active military member needs to be highlighted — perhaps with his words or favorite color.

This act of heroism should remain forever in our collective memories to help recharge our commitments to truth, honor and activism.

You are in our hearts brother Aaron, and we will never forget you — PRESENTE!

*Bruce Berry is a Vietnam Vet, local artist and longtime VFP antiwar activist in the Twin Cities and beyond.*

# Militarism Fuels Climate Crisis

by Barry Riesch

Veterans For Peace stands firm on addressing and not turning its back on the Climate Crisis and in particular U.S. militaries' contribution to it.

Now in its third year, The National Veterans For Peace Climate Crisis and Militarism working group has been raising awareness and educating others about how the endless U.S.-led wars along with others, are having a huge effect on the climate crisis.

It's easy to get distracted from environmental concerns while viewing nonstop coverage of the carnage in Gaza. Seeing innocent children being slaughtered is heart wrenching in a way that rising sea levels, storms, drought and extreme heat threatening water supplies aren't. However, the devastating effect of these things which threaten life on our planet are just as important as stopping war.

Hearing terms like carbon emissions, fossil fuel emissions, carbon footprint, tonnes of planet warming emissions, metric tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO2 equivalent), are important, but they don't pull at the heart strings like seeing a child sprayed with white phosphorus or children who have lost their entire family. Human minds are not always changed by facts alone.

The genocides and the barbaric acts unleashed against the Palestinian people is what awaits those who are fleeing the south because of the climate crisis. The exodus may be in the billions and the pushback is certain to include violence and other barbaric acts. What is happening in Gaza is a rehearsal for the future.

So what can we do to get the world to be more concerned and pay better attention to the Climate Crisis than who to vote for? Unfortunately, environmental groups locally and internationally for the most part have neglected to talk about how war along with a rise of global militarism are contributing heavily to the climate crisis. We are glad that fact is beginning to change. 350.org is now finally mentioning militarism in their work and we are partnering with them. As is About Face/Veterans Against War and Honor The Earth. All of us who are hoping to save life on the planet need to work together, which means calling into account all the contributing factors. Stopping war will not solve the whole problem, but it won't be solved without addressing it either.

We desperately need greater accountability for military greenhouse gas emissions which play an outsize role in the climate crisis. But the true amounts are still largely kept secret and unaccounted for in the annual United Nations (UN) negotiations on climate action.

By 4 December 2024, at least 200 American cargo flights were reported to have delivered 10,000 tonnes of military equipment to Israel. The study found that the

flights guzzled around 50m litres of aviation fuel, spewing an estimated 133,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere — more than the entire island of Grenada last year.

In the words of David Boyd, the UN special rapporteur for human rights and the environment: "The immense magnitude of military emissions — from preparing for war, carrying out war and rebuilding after war, pushes humanity even closer to the precipice of climate catastrophe, and is an idiotic way to spend our shrinking carbon budget."

What can you do? Check out our work on VFP's website, get involved and join us. Find opportunities for our group to give our climate talks or contact your legislators and tell them to focus more taxpayer money and resources on fixing the environment than war. If you already belong to an environmental justice group, convince them to include war and militarism in your agendas. Write articles and editorial commentaries, post VFP U.S. Militarism Fuels Climate Crisis bumper stickers or our small round stickers, print and hand out our brochures, tell weather forecasters to connect environmental disasters to the climate crisis (not just weather as usual), and of course — consume less.

It's our world out there folks, there is no planet B. Building border walls to keep climate refugees out will not solve the problem. The rallying cry from here on is — We must work to stop oil production, reduce personal usage and put an end to U.S. Imperialism and the fossil fuel era if we are serious about repairing the damage to earth.

Veterans For Peace, Climate Crisis and Militarism Project: <https://www.veteransforpeace.org/take-action/climatecrisis>

*Barry Riesch is a Vietnam Vet and former president of National VFP.*

**"When we Glorify War,  
we are not honoring the dead, we are  
enticing the living to join them."**

**Smedley Butler  
Four-Star USMC Major General**



# In Memoriam: Frank Fuller, 1949-2024

by Steve McKeown and Joan Johnson

On February 26th, our beloved and talented former newsletter editor for VFP Chapter 27, Frank Fuller, passed away after a long fight with cancer. Susan Fuller, his partner of 55 years, said that he was a saint to many. He certainly was the patron saint of our newsletter where he was at the helm for 15+ years. His “Peace Index” column was a favorite of many readers, including our well-read friend John Braun, who said that he always looked forward to reading Frank’s column. In it, he would give a comparative breakdown of how U.S. tax money could do so much good, instead of squandering it on unnecessary military spending.

As our editor, Frank often dealt with articles arriving way past the deadlines, some that ran over their allotted page space, and he was often asked to squeeze in late-breaking news stories. Yet, he took it all in stride, was patient with us writers and worked his magic of putting it all together every three months in a timely manner. And it always looked spectacular. While out of town or while undergoing cancer treatments, he still insisted on keeping our quarterly newsletter going, without complaint or delay. All of us on the committee appreciated his going the extra mile — so often.

Frank brought to the table a much-needed affirming, even-keeled attitude and remained calm when discussions

got heated. He was a true diplomat and peacemaker who sought to hear each person’s opinion and helped guide us through conflict. We never experienced him getting angry with any of us — not once. Yet, he did not suffer fools in power, as evidenced by his many writings over the years, which I first discovered in the *Southside Pride*. Coupled with an incredibly wry sense of humor, he would find ironies in American culture, as creatively expressed in the book he and Susan co-authored: *The Departure of Homeland Decency* (Three Rivers Press, 2008). We highly recommend picking it up at Mayday Books. You will not stop laughing.

When praised for the newsletter, he would claim it was because of the writers. Susan expressed to us over the phone that “Frank loved all of you.” And we know we can speak for others who worked with Frank when we say we loved him too.

Thank you Frank, for all the years you gave to us and thank you, Susan, for sharing your husband. We have been deeply blessed to have known Frank and worked with such an amazing person who became our friend. “PRESENTE, Frank Fuller!” Rest in peace dear friend.

*Anti-war activists Steve McKeown and Joan Johnson are longtime contributors to the chapter 27 newsletter.*



*Frank at one of his favorite pastimes — making bread!*

# Unlikely Ally

*(Making War Warm, Fuzzy and Green)*

by Marilyn Berlin Snell – reviewed by Ron Staff

On the book cover the clearly used helmet with its somewhat frayed strap turned upside down holding a red and green newly planted cactus in loose dirt presents a warm-hearted appeal to peace.

It's typical of the Department of Defense (DOD) to want public approval so they use greenwashing techniques like the photo on the jacket cover to convince us that they're eco-friendly. I mean, how could anyone with tender thoughts about saving a small land plant be a problem?

Be advised though, the U.S. military not only wants to be our defense, it's also involved with a PR campaign that's trying to sell the idea that it's now eco-friendly and with us in the battle against climate change. The subtitle confirms this: All one needs to do is read the book to see how benignly our tax dollars are being spent.

For example, when one of the military bases the author visited failed to make a report about contaminated areas, her informer said they didn't seek authority to treat contaminants. So, they mixed the chemicals up and gave them to a licensed contractor to take off base to make things right. Blaming product mishandling is just one way to take care of problems and avoid bad publicity. Plausible deniability works in many ways because it's reasonable to believe that something like that actually happened.

The long-chapter on desert tortoises and the alleged care taken with them at Marine Corps Base Twentynine Palms recalls for me the warning signs attached to the barbed wire fence bordering the Mercury Test Site west of Las Vegas. Atomic testing has gone on there since the '40s, yet the signage directs those who read the signs to take care of the tortoises.

One wonders about the permanent glass bottom lakes created by each of those tests. Whatever was on or under the sand was most probably turned into glass instantly. One might also suppose that any tortoise wanting to be cooled could not have possibly dug in far enough to survive. Each animal in the area then is almost guaranteed to be as frozen as the glass that surrounds it. The short-sightedness and unintended humor of our "military animal-protectors" can reach unusual depths.

All things considered, the likelihood that the DOD is actually an ally with public efforts to manage climate change remains extremely low at best. Still, the book is an interesting read on how the government uses greenwashing to try and turn the proverbial sow's ear into a silk purse.

*Ron Staff is a Marine and wrote for The Stars and Strips while on active duty in Vietnam. He is a longtime antiwar activist and member of VFP chapter 27.*

## UNLIKELY ALLY

HOW THE MILITARY FIGHTS  
CLIMATE CHANGE AND  
PROTECTS THE ENVIRONMENT



MARILYN BERLIN SNELL

## EVENTS CALENDAR

### ONGOING EVENTS

**4-5 pm Mondays.** Stop Line Three Vigil. In front of Governor's Mansion on Summit Ave., St. Paul.

**3-4 pm Mondays.** White Bear Lake Peace Vigil, Hwy. 61. and 4th Ave.

**4-5 pm Wednesdays.** Lake Street/Marshall Ave. Peace Bridge Vigil.

**4:45 pm Wednesdays.** 50th and Halifax, Mpls., Grandmothers for Peace Vigil. (FFI call 612-827-5364)

**Monthly VFP chapter meeting,** 2nd Sunday., 6 pm. 4200 Cedar Ave. S. They are now hybrid meetings (subject to change because of future pandemic situations). Contact VFP at 612-821-9141 for information on how to connect.

# We Have Met the Enemy and They Are Other Democrats

by Craig Wood

The Israeli government is like the bad friend who only calls to ask for money or favors. For 75 years, Jewish supremacists beguiled our nation into believing their problems were America's problems too. By using the tragedy of the Holocaust, they captured our sympathies and eventually played us for suckers — now democrats are angry.

Not all, but a growing number are, once they find out the 260 billion dollars U.S. taxpayers have given the Israeli government since WWII is money down the rathole when measured next to their broken promises, outright lies and deplorable treatment of Palestinians. No wonder these dems are trying to put the kibosh on Israeli funding, after learning that Israelis along with their apologists, have done everything they could for decades to surreptitiously steer U.S. foreign policy toward a favorable view of Israel. Netanyahu, the Israeli imperial wizard of deception, made this abundantly clear in his infamous 2001 comment "America is a thing you can move very easily, move it in the right direction. They won't get in the way."

Biden, who sometimes resembles an ineffectual palace eunuch more than a wise king, confirms this every time he shakes a finger at Israeli leaders during their incursions or implores them to be more careful with their two and five-thousand pound bombs while they're ethnically cleansing. His reluctance to call Netanyahu out for the genocidal slaughter in Gaza is beyond disappointing and embarrassing.

What can these democrats do when so many others only give lip service to a lasting ceasefire? Congress hasn't been much help — so far, less than 60 members have called for one. At a grassroots level, groups typically on the front lines in fights for equal rights and fair play like liberal artists, musicians, feminists and Jews are noticeably absent.

In early February this year, the Minneapolis City Council passed a ceasefire resolution after Jewish and Democratic Party mayor Jacob Frey vetoed it because he believed the proposal was "one-sided." One might wonder what the other side of an unstopped genocidal war would be. According to the *StarTribune* "Frey said he is open to signing a "truly unifying ceasefire resolution," but noted his office has not drafted its own version yet. He told reporters the veto was "not an easy decision" and that he made it after listening to "people in my family, my extended Jewish community, and people throughout the city." There was no mention of him talking with Palestinians.

Just before the resolution passed, thirty-four Minnesota rabbis signed a statement supporting the mayor's veto. To date, this city council resolution has

the strongest language in the country because it calls for the U.S. to stop military funding to Israel. One of the signatories was a Senior Rabbi who I wanted to interview for a local anti-war newsletter, but she turned me down a couple months ago. That makes five refusals from rabbis in less than a year.

Even those progressive artists who do publicly support a ceasefire can get wish-washy about it later. One recently qualified his online ceasefire statement with a call for lowering rhetorical tones and suggested that the U.S. facilitate discussions between Israel and surrounding Arab countries. Turning down the volume is one thing, but why anyone would still believe that an inveterate liar such as Netanyahu or his murderous gang of sociological mutants should be trusted again is beyond me. If there ever is an agreement, it would have to come with enforceable, iron-clad guarantees from the outside.

Then there was a luminary folk singer/songwriter who shared a green room with Bob Dylan who soon removed his stop the genocide post and replaced it with a flower. He later posted the words to a lullaby-like song he wrote

*The Enemy, cont'd on page 12*



Friend Eric J Garcia on facebook or follow at elmacheteillustrated @instagram.

Artist and veteran Eric Garcia is a member of VFP chapter 27.

## *The Enemy, from page 11*

about poets, artists and doctors parachuting into war zones. When I commented on his FB page about the futility of airdropping poets and artists who have yet to condemn the Israeli government, he removed the post and blocked me.

One can only imagine the impact Bob Dylan might have if he called for sanctions and a ceasefire, but that might be too much to expect. According to a two-year old NWC/FORBES report, he has 70 cars, 15 mansions, 3 yachts, over 180 luxury watches and a nuclear bunker. Maybe he became one of the people he warned us about. On the other hand, Taylor Swift went to a comedy club last December that was raising money for Gazans. Bless her 1.1 billion dollar heart.

It can be especially irksome when artists with long histories of showing sympathy to Native Americans don't use their personas and platforms to publicly damn the U.S. for supporting the genocidal Israeli government. Perhaps that's understandable given all the whispers about Zionist Jews holding so many purse strings in the arts and entertainment business. It might seem prudent then for artists to focus on fairness issues concerning women and the LGBT community instead of the beleaguered Palestinians. After all — a show of support for Palestinians may reduce audience sizes or wreck chances for an audition, gig or a place on the arts-grants-gravy-train.

Artist Frank Big Bear combines early dreams from his childhood on the White Earth Reservation along with tribal and urban imagery in personal storytelling narratives told largely through surrealistic and cubistic traditions. He also drove a cab in Minneapolis for over thirty years to support his family.

"I think maybe people are starting to speak out more about what's happening in Gaza around the country — maybe not on my Facebook page, because most of them are democrats who voted for Biden. I still speak out on Facebook knowing that I might be blacklisted because of Jewish influences in the art market and other institutions. I know I was kinda ignored by museums and institutions that supported native art around the country before the

war in Gaza, especially for shows and grants. I guess you have to play the game by their rules and be popular and know the juries. It was difficult for me to play the game when I was younger because I was raising six children and had a full time job. I didn't have the money or time to fly around the country and promote my work. I had to rely on and trust art dealers who are not exactly trustworthy. But getting back to why some people are not saying anything, I think it's because they're afraid of losing their jobs which would devastate their livelihood, especially in this economy." — Frank Big Bear

Feminists too have been slow to join the call for a ceasefire and ending support for Israel. Member of the European Parliament and Irish firebrand Clare Daly

recently voiced a call for the United Nations to look into how war affects women: Particularly in Gaza where "70% of the victims are women and children" and those giving birth still go without anesthesia or professional help and use tent scraps sometimes to mop up postpartum bleeding. She went on at length about the horrific, war-related traumas mothers and kids experience and ended her talk with a scathing rebuke to feminists who have not shown any solidarity with Gazan

women: "that's not feminism, that's an abomination and I don't know if God will forgive them, but I and millions of others certainly won't."

Meanwhile, the chatter classes drone on about how the Israel/Palestine dilemma is unsolvable, too complicated or how they have sympathy for both sides or feel so emotionally torn they can't bring themselves to take a stand — perhaps they need some new material.

This article recently appeared in *Dissident Voice*.

*Craig Wood joined the National Guard to avoid Vietnam, just like the 59 other guys in his platoon. He is the newsletter editor.*

***One can only imagine the impact Bob Dylan might have if he called for sanctions and a ceasefire, but that might be too much to expect. According to a two-year old NWC/FORBES report, he has 70 cars, 15 mansions, 3 yachts, over 180 luxury watches and a nuclear bunker. Maybe he became one of the people he warned us about.***

# Palestine Awakening

by Bill McGrath

I read *Exodus* by Leon Uris before seeing the movie. As a young adult of the '70s, I was fascinated by Jewish contributions to America. Maybe we all were.

I had a Jewish girlfriend while attending college in upstate New York, and another one in Minneapolis. (Not at the same time!) At various times, I had a Jewish landlord, and later a Jewish employer. A young Jewish man lived in my house for a while and I recall attending a Rosh Hashanah observance with a Jewish family and the bar mitzvah of a friend's son. When I owned a small business, my right-hand man was a Jewish writer.

My experiences with Jewish people were so positive that it was hard for me to gradually develop opposition towards the government of Israel. But it happened.

Being a member of a peace group between September 2001 and the war against Iraq in 2003, I listened to many speakers. One was a woman who talked about her experiences living among Palestinians. Gradually, I learned more about the oppression of these indigenous people and later spent a month in the West Bank during 2007.

I was given guided tours to Nablus, Jenin, Jericho, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Hebron, and the Negev Desert of southern Israel. This included visits to four refugee camps, where people lived in miserable cinderblock cubes. Although I did not go into the West Bank Jewish red-roofed settlements, we passed by several. To me, they seemed like green hilltop oases and resembled nice homes I'd seen in southern California.

One Palestinian I met said he had been shot by plastic bullets on seven occasions during various anti-Israeli protests and showed us his scars. Our van encountered one of many checkpoints along the road and at one point, a young Israeli soldier told us that international visitors could continue traveling, but our van and Palestinian driver couldn't. We ended up hiring three taxis.

I went to a protest where an Israel separation wall had put local people on one side and their agricultural land on the other. Because many of us refused to leave the site, Israeli soldiers fired CS tear gas into the crowd. I saw peo-



Photo courtesy of Hamde Abu Rahma

ple being taken away on stretchers and was told that people had been shot, probably with Israeli plastic bullets.

I also heard stories from Palestinians who said they previously had lived in one location until they had been forced out to make way for Israeli settlements. In Hebron, we saw a place where Jewish settlers throw their garbage down on Palestinians and inside a Hebron mosque, we saw the place where a fanatic Zionist killed 38 Palestinians in 1994. Nothing bad happened to me during my visit.

Since then, I've come to appreciate some of the wonderful differences between America Jewish people and those in charge of the Israeli government.

*Bill McGrath is a member of VFP chapter 27 and lives in Northfield MN. He was in high school when Kent State happened and has worked as a writer, business owner and gravedigger.*

**U.S. MILITARISM  
FUELS  
CLIMATE CRISIS**

[www.veteransforpeace.org/take-action/climatecrisis](http://www.veteransforpeace.org/take-action/climatecrisis)



## *Occupation, from page 1*

after the 1967 fighting and were then deported from the territories occupied by Israel, as were another 130,000 from the captured Golan Heights.

Israel also prevented Palestinian refugees from exercising their lawful right of return to their homes and lands by denying them entry at the borders and by using force against those who surreptitiously attempted to return. Israel also destroyed hundreds of Arab towns and villages to prevent their Arab inhabitants from having homes and property to return to, and seized and annexed Palestinian lands including East Jerusalem and about 27 square miles of West Bank land which became Greater Jerusalem, the so-called eternal capital of Israel.

Later it annexed the Golan Heights. These annexations have been declared illegal under international law. This conduct against the Palestinian people also constitutes war crimes and a crimes against humanity by Israel.

### **Illegal Settlements:**

Plans were made and implemented almost immediately by Israel after the 1967 war to keep the occupied territories as an integral part of Greater Israel or Eretz Yisrael, and build all-Jewish settlements in the occupied areas to create facts on the ground that would make the establishment of a separate Palestinian state impossible. In September 1967, a secret legal memo commissioned by Israel's prime minister made it clear that transferring Israeli Jewish citizens onto settlements in the occupied territories would be a direct violation of international law, specifically prohibited by the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

Despite this warning, Israel began the process of transferring its Jewish civilians into settlements, establishing 12 in 1967, followed by ever-increasing numbers in the next five decades. Today, over 10 percent of Israel's Jewish population, well over 800,000 Israeli Jews, live in hundreds of illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, making the creation of a contiguous Palestinian state virtually impossible, as was the plan from the very beginning. If Israel had no intention of withdrawing from the occupied territories, and deliberately violated most if not all the legal precepts regarding military occupation, its behavior was and remains illegal under international law and constitutes grave violations of the laws of war, or war crimes.

### **The Law and Practice of Apartheid:**

Can Israel's illegal military occupation since the Nakba in 1948 be described as apartheid? The term was originally used to describe a system of racial segregation in South Africa. Today, the crime of apartheid, according to the UN Apartheid Convention, applies to acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining

domination by one racial, ethnic or religious group over another by acts of systematic oppression; in Israel's case, Jewish supremacy over Palestinian Arabs.

Each of these examples applies to Israel's treatment of Palestinians in the occupied territories, and, to a lesser extent, to the 20 percent of Israeli citizens who are non-Jews. At least 57 laws in Israel discriminate against non-Jewish Israeli citizens, forcing them to live in impoverished Arab communities surrounded by prosperous all-Jewish communities which receive the vast majority of public resources.

Today, there remain over 300,000 Israeli Arab citizens who are internally displaced refugees of the 1948 war who fled or were forced to leave their homes and villages and were not allowed to return to reclaim their homes, land and property after the end of the war even though they are lawful residents and citizens of Israel. In the occupied West Bank, conditions are far worse. Palestinians are forced to live in enclaves (the so-called Area A) surrounded by Israeli military zones (Area B). Area C, about 61 percent of the West Bank, contains over 600,000 Jewish settlers living in all-Jewish settlements under complete Israeli control. This area completely surrounds and engulfs Areas A and B.

Palestinians are forced to live in dozens of separate enclaves, their movement heavily restricted. Arbitrary arrest and detention of adults and even young children is commonplace, due process a distant dream. Palestinian land in the West Bank and East Jerusalem is frequently confiscated and used to build all-Jewish Israeli settlements protected by Israeli Army units and connected by access roads that are restricted to use by Jews only. Israeli Jews living in the occupied territories have full civil rights including the right to vote while their Palestinian Arab neighbors live under Israeli military law, have no civil rights, and cannot vote in Israel's national elections. All of these discriminatory restrictions on the Palestinian Arab population clearly meet the definition of apartheid.

Stephen Robert, a Jewish-American investment banker and long-time Israel supporter, as well as a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a former chancellor of Brown University, described the situation in the occupied territories as apartheid after fact-finding visits to the West Bank and East Jerusalem in 2011. In a long and detailed article in *The Nation* entitled "Apartheid on Steroids," he concluded:

How can Jews, who have been persecuted for centuries, tolerate this inhumanity? Where is their moral compass? How can this situation be acceptable to Judaism's spiritual and political leaders? I don't have that answer; except to say that Israel's biggest enemy has become itself.

*Occupation, cont'd on page 15*

## Occupation, from page 14

### Apartheid Comparisons:

The treatment of Palestinian Arabs by Israeli Jews is also strikingly similar to the treatment of non-whites by South Africa's all-white regime under apartheid. All the conditions for apartheid, the deportations, the annexations, the creation of Jewish settlements and the isolation of Palestinians under military law were put in place by the Israeli government in 1967.

Since both the intent and the fact of apartheid were in place in 1967, and since conditions have only gotten worse, it has become impossible to call Israel's military occupation of the Palestinian people on Palestinian lands in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza as anything other than apartheid.

The only remaining question is why we as Americans continue to support a country whose oppression of its Arab population is so contrary to our own national values, a country that openly practices apartheid. Israel's conduct toward the Palestinian people makes a mockery of its claim to be "the only democracy in the Middle East," as does its claim that Israel and the U.S. share common values.

It's high time that we, as Americans, face up to the fact that supporting Israel is supporting apartheid, and that our military, economic and diplomatic support of that country has fostered and abetted nearly six decades of continuing oppression of over five million Palestinians, actions that constitute crimes against humanity, grave violations of the laws of war, and war crimes under the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

It is also high time we put a stop to it by telling our representatives in Congress that while we as Americans may support the state of Israel, we will no longer provide military, economic and diplomatic support for its state of apartheid.

A shorter version of this article appeared in *Mondoweiss*.

*Gil Maguire is a member of VFP chapter 27 — a U.S. Air Force Vietnam-era vet, retired civil rights lawyer, former school teacher and small business owner. He and his wife Robin moved to St. Paul from Southern California in 2019 to be near their grandchildren. Gil published the historical novel The Exodus Betrayal the same year.*

## Write My Name

*(Some parents in Gaza write their children's names on them to help identify them should either they or the children be killed.)*

Write my name on my leg, Mama  
Use the black permanent marker  
with the ink that doesn't bleed  
if it gets wet, the one that doesn't melt  
if it's exposed to heat

Write my name on my leg, Mama  
Make the lines thick and clear  
Add your special flourishes  
so I can take comfort in seeing  
my mama's handwriting when I go to sleep

Write my name on my leg, Mama  
and on the legs of my sisters and brothers  
This way we will belong together  
This way we will be known  
as your children

Write my name on my leg, Mama  
and please write your name  
and Baba's name on your legs, too  
so we will be remembered  
as a family

Write my name on my leg, Mama  
Don't add any numbers  
like when I was born or the address of our home  
I don't want the world to list me as a number  
I have a name and I am not a number

Write my name on my leg, Mama  
When the bomb hits our house  
When the walls crush our skulls and bones  
our legs will tell our story, how  
there was nowhere for us to run

— Zeina Azzam  
*Palestinian writer, activist, poet laureate  
Alexander, Virginia*



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## SUPPORT THE TROOPS! BRING THEM HOME ALIVE NOW!

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At least 8,492 dead in Iraq and Afghanistan;  
over one million injured veterans.

An estimated 22 veterans die from suicide each day,  
amounting to over 24,090 over the past three years.



VFP chapter 27 member Jim Schrack



Sign placed by protestor outside Twin Cities Public Television. Photo courtesy of Ross Rowley