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VETERANS FOR PEACE NEWS

MINNESOTA VETERANS FOR PEACE, CHAPTER 27

Veterans for Peace News is published quarterly by Minnesota Veterans for Peace, Chapter 27.

Veterans for Peace works to increase awareness of the costs of war, restrain 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 nonviolent 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)



Former State Senator Becky Lourey speaks to the crowd on Memorial Day.

Remembering all casualties of war

by Barry Riesch

VFP held its yearly Memorial Service alongside the Minnesota Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and attendance was good in spite of threatening rain and lack of coverage from both the *StarTribune* and *Pioneer Press*. Other forms of networking must be working.

Our featured speaker was former State Senator Becky Lourey. She began her talk by reciting VFP's statement of purpose, with no prodding from organizers. She then gave a heart-wrenching account of the loss of her son Matt. Her account of his remains being sent home to her, including a poncho worn by Matt which had vomit on it when received and then actually wearing the poncho, were very emotional.

A flag ceremony was commenced for Kenny Paulson, a friend of mine, whose brother Larry was killed in the Vietnam War. Kenny has attended VFP Memorial Day services

almost since their inception. Two years ago he contacted the remaining members of Larry's unit, who gave Kenny a life-changing account of Larry's service and death, that gave him a much better understanding of what happened to his brother. This exchange is what prompted the flag ceremony, with VFP presenting Kenny and his family in honor of his brother and for their sacrifice.

As life would have it, Kenny has an older brother Bob who had a son named after Larry (both named Larry Edward Paulson), who made a career of the military. After returning from a tour in Afghanistan in 2013, he entered a 30-day treatment program with the military. Within days of his release, however, he took his own life. This tragedy happened in April of 2013 after plans for the flag ceremony had been made. We were still able to give an account and honor this family's great sacrifice

Memorial Day, cont'd page 11

Seven Power Points that can guide discussions of peace

by Larry Johnson, VFP Chapter 27 President

P **Peace Thru Strength To Tell The Truth, Even When They Try To Cover It Up.** “Peace Thru Strength” usually means we have more bombs and missiles than they do. We veterans were asked to go into war to face what many consider the ultimate fear, losing one’s life. The reality is that people are more afraid of getting up in front of a group to speak than they are of dying. More fearful than that is getting up to tell the truth, especially when its immensely unpopular, but that’s what Veterans For Peace does all the time. We have developed the strength to resurrect the truth, the first casualty of war. There is a solid, strong answer to the inevitable question, “With non-violence, how do you stop Hitler?” Part of the answer is “Don’t arm him in the first place,” which is what was done by many companies from the U.S and other World War II Allied countries, and is still done too often today.

How Can You Do The Will Of God, Going Into All The World To Convert The “Heathen,” At The Same Time As You Kill The Godless Heathen For Jesus? Steve McKeown asked me to reiterate this point that just slipped out when he and I did our annual talk to classes at Academy of Holy Angels, for their Conscientious Objection, Just War, and Social Justice unit. My caution about who gets to decide the will of God was totally locked in when I read Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* in college. It read like any of the will of God spiritual tracts I grew up with, only it developed the theme, “The Jews did this, this, and this . . . therefore it is the will of God that we exterminate the Jews.” I knew my parents, immersed in the religious rhetoric I was raised in, had struggled with the will of God related to my decision to be drafted, refusing to carry the weapon that would allow me to kill the godless heathen. I didn’t know to what degree they struggled, till I found a Minneapolis paper column they had saved at that time. Louis Cassels quoted a Vietnam-era parent saying, “I cannot accept my son’s death as a matter of God’s will. I reject a God who would create so well and then purposely destroy. The God I reverence is a God of creation. My son was destroyed by me and by you, and by man’s will, denying the will of God.”

EMDR Trauma Treatment Could Bring Peace Back To The Life Of Someone You Know. My wife Elaine Wynne was asked several months ago, by the national EMDR Humanitarian Assistance Project, to manage a demonstration grant to provide EMDR trauma treatment free of charge to Minnesota veterans. EMDR, or “Eye

Movement Desensitization Response,” for many trauma survivors, is more effective than other modalities, as it literally dislodges the trauma memory from the body. If fireworks, or a backfiring car, makes a veteran automatically respond as if he or she were in a combat zone, the EMDR normalizes the civilian event, separates it from the trauma of the battlefield, and helps a veteran regain past resilience. Elaine has been a peace activist since the 60s, working to create fewer unnecessary veterans through stopping unnecessary wars, but she’s also been doing EMDR for over 20 years, just not for veterans. If you know someone who’s served since 2001, they can call Elaine at 763-546-1662 and explore an EMDR referral.

Bells Ringing For Peace Around The World. Sculptor, Gita Ghei, got us a State Arts Board grant to have veterans work with her to cast bells, in conjunction with our Armistice Bell Ringing effort. Chante Wolf is working on the possibility of some of the metal coming from spent ammunition shells. Last year our November 11 “Remembrance and Commitment to Peace” spread to at least 60 other cities, through national promotion by Move to Amend and VFP National. Gita believes we’ll have something to show for this year’s Armistice event, and that we could have a culminating event by March 20 World Storytelling Day. This would allow for worldwide promotion of the ringing of the bells, as it happened in 1918, when WWI weary people everywhere moved to end warfare.

Fighting To Know The Truth That Makes Us Free. When Memorial Day comes, some pause long enough from the sales and picnics to say, “Thank a veteran for keeping us free.” Since so many who thump that kind of rhetoric consider themselves to be Bible Believers, what if we looked seriously at the New Testament injunction, “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,” or any of the so-called Laws of God, like don’t lie or don’t steal. Saying you can’t regulate defense contractors, because it would discourage free enterprise, even when they sell equipment that electrocutes our own soldiers, is not free enterprise. It’s a mechanism to allow them to get away with lying and stealing. What if we operated our defense system, based on the truth? What if we simply insisted on the “no killing civilians” tenets of the Geneva Conventions, or the Just War Theory. What if our defense system began with one simple truth, like, “Since killing civilians is a war crime, how do we stand up to wrong without doing that?”

Continued next page

Really Saving Lives With Unmanned Devices. Elaine and I went to a presentation by Legacies of War, an organization training young men and women in Laos to walk with special hand-held devices, looking for the still many unexploded bombs and ordnance dropped along the Ho Chi Minh Trail during Vietnam. It's important, dangerous work, necessary to prevent farmers, children, and others from being blown up while going about their daily lives. One supporter was a retired ambassador to Laos, and Elaine asked him, "Wouldn't it be great if the companies who made these bombs would invest in unmanned detonation devices to do this work?" Nervously, he replied, "These companies generally don't like to get involved in these things." Good for this organization for doing this work, but what is wrong with us, that they must fight for support to put young people at risk for something that should never have happened?

Can We Write Letters That Decision Makers Won't Throw Away? I just finished *Peace is the Way*, a collection of "best" articles from the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the first peace organization I belonged to in the late 60s. One of them, "Being Peace" by Thich Nhat Hanh, was one I had pulled out and tucked away somewhere, long ago when it first appeared. He says, "The peace movement has much anger and frustration. We write good protest letters, but we can't yet write love letters. We must write letters to the Congress and President, that they won't throw in the trash; letters they will like to receive. The way we speak, the kind of language we use, and the kind of understanding we express, should not turn people off. Can we in the peace movement talk in loving speech, showing the way to peace?"

This War Business: Teaching by example

by Tom Dooley

Statistics can be boring but not this one. In the spring issue of our Newsletter, Editor Frank Fuller showed: 1.1 million U. S. soldiers have been killed in all wars since 1776. That is 237 years!

But in only 44 years since Robert Kennedy was killed there have been 1.4 million gun deaths in the U.S.

On Dec 14, 2012, 28 children and faculty were killed in Newtown CT. In the five months since, there have been about 12,300 gun deaths: homicide, suicides and accidental deaths. When I show these figures to some friends, they are flabbergasted!

Here is a list of gun murders by nation in one year: Finland 17, Austria 35, U.K. 39, Spain 60, Germany 194, Canada 200, USA 9,484.

The disparity is astounding. Something is going wrong here far more than anywhere else. Ask your NRA guy, maybe he knows.

It is commonly said that a gun is an inanimate thing, so how could it influence behavior. The Indian Princess Sita said many centuries ago, "The bearing of a weapon changes the nature of the bearer," just as the driving of a vehicle changes the nature of the driver sometimes resulting in "road rage."

Educators say example is the best teacher and we have one of the greatest teachers: the U.S. government and military.

Soldiers: Know Your Rights

To Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan: You took an oath to uphold the Constitution, not to support policies that are illegal.

The GI Hotline phone number is:

1-800-394-9544

VFP Education Project Report for the 2012-13 School Year

by Michael Orange

When the boy stood with a deep scowl on his face and walked out of his senior high school social studies classroom, I knew I was doing my job. Probably inspired by his bold act, two other boys at different times during my "Truth in Recruiting" presentation also headed toward the door but decided to turn around when a fourth boy sitting closest to the door discouraged them. I've been speaking annually to high school and college classes about the military since 1984, but this was the first time a student walked out.

I assume that my messages about the one-way contract that binds recruits for a minimum of eight years, with no comparable obligation on the part of the military, contradicted what those boys had been told. This includes the strings attached to signing bonuses for recruits and GI Bill benefits as well as the history of how the military uses its soldiers for experiments. Or maybe it was learning how the wartime civilian death rates have steadily increased from 15 percent of all deaths in World War One to over 90 percent in the most recent war on Iraq. Maybe it was when I linked desensitization training in boot camp to the moral injuries that stem from our modern warfare methods as a partial explanation of why, on average, a veteran commits suicide every 65 minutes, every day. I watched the faces of the girls when I reported that 30 percent of women in the military reported being victims of rape or attempted rape and 75 percent reported being sexually harassed. The annual \$4 billion Pentagon marketing campaign is effective.

"No. That's just not true," one high school senior told

me. I reminded him that he could find my published sources on the handout.

"You make military service sound so bad," said another senior in a different class. I explained that, to enable more informed decisions, I address aspects of military service that the Pentagon's recruitment program evades. I always repeat several times during my presentations that my beef is not with the military but with how the policy-makers use and abuse it to wage unjust wars. I repeat how we all should be profoundly grateful and respectful of the one percent of our adult population who took an oath to defend the Constitution, an oath that demands tremendous sacrifice from them and from those who love and care for them.

I don't promote a no-action alternative. I tell the students I still believe in duty, honor, and alternative service. Some of the bravest and most dedicated people in the world work for the Peace Corps, Amnesty International, Non-Violent Peaceforce, and hundreds of other humanitarian organizations. I tell them there are a lot of things worth fighting for, believing in, and having a passion for. I just don't think killing civilians is one of them.

Sometimes I close the alternative action portion of my presentation with this quote from Sen. Robert F. Kennedy: "It is from numberless acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a [person] stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, these ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

Education Project visits schools throughout cities

by Steve McKeown

During the last school year Michael Orange has spoken at Southwest High in Minneapolis to a total of five classes at two different times, two classes at St. Thomas Univ. in St. Paul, and two classes at the Univ. of Minnesota with Dave Lodgson. Larry Johnson has spoken at St. Cloud Tech. and St. Cloud State to one class each, one class at Normandale J.C., three classes at Lino Lakes Elementary, nine classes at the Academy of Holy Angels in Richfield with Steve McKeown. They both spoke to Every Church a Peace Church, and to People of Faith Peacemakers. They were joined by Dick Foley for an Armistice Day talk at Hill Murray H.S. in Maplewood for one class each. Dick and Dave Culver spoke to eight classes at Cretin Derham Hall in

St. Paul. Wes Davey, Dave Lodgson, and Steve McKeown spoke at Augsburg College in Mpls to one class. Steve McKeown and Doug Drews spoke at the Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet in St. Paul for an Armistice Day Remembrance, where Joan Johnson provided music; John Varone spoke and rang bells at Holy Trinity Lutheran in St. Peter; and Dave Lodgson and Bruce Berry at Britt's Pub. Tom White spoke at St. Luke's Presbyterian in Wayzata, St. Joan of Arc in Mpls and Every Church a Peace Church.

VFP Chapter 27 members have tabled at many events including counter recruitment at schools, have spoken at demonstrations and had short words at different events, along with countless radio and television appearances. They have also been featured in numerous newspapers.

Kellogg-Briand Pact update

by Steve McKeown

This past April Congressman Keith Ellison submitted to the Congressional Record a notice of what the Kellogg Briand Pact is and our chapter's involvement in calling attention to this Pact that outlaws war. Additionally he encouraged members to look for the winners of a Peace Essay Contest facilitated by the West Suburban Peacemakers of Chicago entitled "How can the U.S. obey the law against war?" The best of these essays are to be submitted to Congress in August.

We have been meeting with St Paul Councilman David Thune, and he is confident that a Proclamation he will introduce Aug. 21 at 3:30 p.m. that recognizes the 85th Anniversary of the Pact will pass. Chapter members and supporters are encouraged to attend this meeting in the Council Chambers. We are also planning on having the Pact itself displayed on Kellogg Blvd. along with petitioning during that week. Hand-written signatures now number 7050 from 192 cities and towns in Minnesota calling for a Holiday to remember the Law that outlawed war. Additionally there are 389 from 46 states that have signed while we have been collecting.

Michael and Lizze Gibba, the current residents of the Kellogg House located in St. Paul's Crocus Hill neighborhood, will be hosting a celebration for the 85th anniversary

of the signing of the Kellogg Briand Pact at the house on Aug 27th. Social hour will begin at 6:30 p.m. with the program running from 7 to 8:30. ATTENDEES WILL BE THE FIRST 50 VFP MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS THAT R.S.V.P. to Steve at s.h.mckeown@hotmail.com or 612 869 2040. You can also contact the VFP office, but make sure you have a confirmation.

Lizze is planning the music, which promises to be nothing less than magnificent. A friend of hers, Alik Burnstone, will write and read poetry about Frank Kellogg and the Pact. Burnstone is a Professor of English at the University of Missouri. She is also a poet, translator, critic, and editor with numerous publications, and has been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize twice.

We expect the Proclamation to be presented to the Gibbas, along with another speaker. Light refreshments will be served, and there is no admission. Come celebrate the anniversary of the law that renounced war as an instrument of National Policy and was the legal basis for the Nuremberg Trials after WWII. It is still in effect today, so reserve your spot early to honor and uphold the vital importance of the Kellogg Briand Pact.

Thanks to Dave Lodgson's entering our chapter for a workshop at the National Convention, where author Dave Swanson and myself will be giving a workshop Aug 9th on "Abolishing War as an Instrument of National Policy" centering on the usefulness of the Kellogg Briand Pact.

Bush administration sued for starting Iraq War

by Coleen Rowley

On March 13, 2013, San Francisco Attorney D. Inder Comar filed a lawsuit in the Northern District of California against George W. Bush, Richard Cheney, Colin Powell, Donald Rumsfeld, Condoleezza Rice and Paul Wolfowitz on behalf of an Iraqi client and on behalf of himself as a United States citizen.

The lawsuit alleges that these defendants planned and waged a "war of aggression" in violation of laws set down at the Nuremberg Trials in 1946 (based on violation of the Kellogg-Briand Pact). The Iraqi plaintiff exercised jurisdiction of the court through the Alien Tort Statute, a law passed

by the first Congress in 1789 and seeks to hold these defendants personally liable for their actions.

The case seeks to set new precedent regarding the obligations of government leaders. It asks the court to acknowledge that a common law and/or constitutional right (premised in the First Amendment) to receive honest and candid information from government officials with respect to war and peace.

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Is There A War On Women?

by Chante Wolf

Recent news headlines range from the Japanese raping women who were to “comfort” the male soldiers during World War II, American military recruiters raping high school girls they are trying to enlist, and the head officers for the Army and Air Force sexual assault units being arrested for assault. According to one Army general, “rape is now an epidemic in the armed forces.” However, one piece is missing from this observation: that rape is also a tactic of warfare. The intention is to psychologically humiliate the males of the opposing “team.” It is also looked upon for the returning “victorious” soldiers as their “booty.”

In the U. S. military the numbers of sexual assault against service women rose in most cases, each year.

What are these assaults all about? Power, domination, misogyny or just a plain war on women?

According to historian, Susan Brownmiller, “War provides men with the perfect psychological backdrop to give vent to their contempt for women.” The maleness of the military — the brute power of weaponry exclusive

to their hands, the spiritual bonding of men at arms, the manly discipline of orders given and orders obeyed, the simple logic of the hierarchical command — confirms for men what they long suspect — that women are peripheral to the world that counts. She writes that rape accompanies territorial advance by the winning side in land conflicts as one of the spoils of war, and that “Men who rape are ordinary Joes, made unordinary by entry into the most exclusive male-only club in the world.”

The other night I was watching *MASH* on TV and was struck by the episode that was on. It was about Major Margaret Houlihan going into Colonel Henry Blake's office while he is watching a porn movie with Trapper John and Hawkeye. As she voiced her disgust in what they were doing, they made fun of her, stating that they are at war and have needs as men.

During Desert Storm in 1991, the base commanders used porn videos to excite the pilots before they went on their bombing missions. When I relay this I always add that they “ejaculated” their missions with “penetrating” bombs. The phallic symbolism of the military weapon systems is every bit the same as “ejaculation.” However, it is not to conceive life, but to destroy everything in contact including

our precious planet.

Of course I must say here, not all men rape, but then if they do, not many ever talk about it. In his book, *Kill Anything That Moves*, Nick Turse combed through piles of documented records from the war on Vietnam finding that there were many, many more incidents like My Lai than not. During the four hours Charlie Company worked on the village of My Lai, “victims included women, men, children, and infants. Some of the women were gang-raped and their bodies were later found to be mutilated and many women were allegedly raped prior to the killings.” This account also included the rape of infants and toddlers.

Do women think that because they are allowed in combat, rape will not happen with them present? Or will they be forced to participate in some twisted manner or another? I would say that it will be very hard to stop one man, let alone

a group of men, from raping Iraqi or Afghani women, because, if there is an epidemic of rape against women in uniform, how are they going to stop it from happening against civilian women in combat zones, without retaliation?

Year	Total Cases Reported	Unrestricted Cases	Restricted Cases*
2009	3230	2516	714
2010	3158	2419	748
2011	3192	2439	753
2012	3374	2558	816

*No public record

As for American military members being exempt from the participation of mass rapes during WWII, according to Wikipedia, “secret wartime files made public only in 2006 reveal that American GIs committed 400 sexual offenses in Europe, including 126 rapes in England, between 1942 and 1945. A study by Robert J. Lilly estimates that a total of 14,000 civilian women in England, France and Germany were raped by American GIs during World War II. It is estimated that there were around 3,500 rapes by American servicemen in France between June 1944 and the end of the war, and one historian has claimed that sexual violence against women in liberated France was common.”

In a recently released copy of the 2001 Authorization to Use Military Force, it gives the President the authority to put boots on the ground in any country around the world for an indefinite period of time. The human targets of our military wrath can even take place against those “terrorists” even if they were not born by 9/11/01.

This also means that the war against women, both civilian and in uniform will therefore continue 10-fold for what presidential candidate John McCain told constituents about

War on women, cont'd page 9

The media again get the Korean situation wrong

by Alan Dale, member of Minnesota Peace Action Coalition

When former NBA star Dennis Rodman returned from a visit to North Korea in February of this year, he said he had a message from North Korea to the Obama Administration: "Give us a call."

While Rodman's trip was met in the U.S. media with derision, the message to the U.S. government to open talks with North Korea should be taken seriously.

The narrative in the U.S. press about North Korea has been to characterize Kim Jong-un, the new leader of North Korea, as a man who behaves badly and is a possible threat to U.S. citizens.

At the same time, the U.S. press downplayed the February, 2013, war games by the U.S. and South Korean militaries involving tens of thousands of troops. This year's events represent one of the largest military exercises in the world and are given the propagandistic names of "Key Resolve" and "Foal Eagle."

If a foreign government sent tens of thousands of troops, naval vessels, and jets capable of delivering nuclear weapons to the borders of the U.S. to conduct "exercises," we would expect to see self-righteous indignation from the U.S. government and media.

Not surprisingly, the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) sees the war games as a threat and a rehearsal for a future U.S.-North Korean war.

The Rodman trip and message welcoming talks occurred weeks before the start of these games. As the U.S. government refused to offer any response, reports of a developing war crisis in Korea increased. This escalation in tensions has not gone unnoticed by the peace and justice community.

Gregory Elich, a member of the advisory board of the Korea Policy Institute and the Korea Truth Commission, in an April 9, 2013 article in the on-line publication Counter Punch, wrote: "Relations between the United States and North Korea have reached a nadir, and in most Western media reports it is the seemingly irrational harsh rhetoric emanating from North Korea that is to blame. Inexplicably, we are told, North Korea has chosen to raise tensions."

"What is missing from this image of hostile North Korean behavior and blameless American victimhood is context. As is often the case, the media present events in an isolated fashion as if arising suddenly and without cause."

"One does not have to look very far back in time to discern what is troubling the North Koreans. In recent months,

the Obama Administration has taken a number of steps that the DPRK has perceived as threatening."

Moon Jae Pak, a member of the Korean American National Coordinating Council, wrote in the *Korean Quarterly* newspaper Spring 2013 edition that "...to the eyes of North Koreans and any objective bystanders, these war games carried practically on the doorsteps of North Koreans within just a few miles of the coast, is an exercise in the invasion of North Korea. And recently, it was also seen as a practice in preparation for a presumed North Korean regime collapse."

Pak explained in the article: "To this date, 60 years after the end of the Korean War, the U.S. has steadfastly refused to sign a peace treaty with North Korea in spite of the North's continued demand for it."

A statement issued by the Global Campaign for Peace not War on the Korean Peninsula and the Northeast Asian Region says, in part:

"The astronomical waste of human and material resources, ecological-environmental devastations, and the Korean national wealth as a whole incurred by the forcibly imposed division for over 60 years in general, by the ongoing U.S. military presence in an unknown number of U.S. military bases and the U.S.-led (so-called) 'military drills' and their continued 'nuclear war games' in particular cannot be easily described or measured either."

"In the last four months, the Korean peninsula, the Northeast Asia region and thereby the whole world seem to have been thrown into a new reality, a real possibility of the first-ever, Nuclear War."

The Global campaign statement concludes, "This is the very reason why tens of millions of Koreans from all ends in north, south and overseas, together with tens of millions of peace-loving peoples from around the world, in unison and in solidarity, call for Peace on the Korean peninsula and the region, not for Wars not only in the region but also anywhere around the world."

A 60th anniversary remembrance of the Korean Armistice is being planned locally with details to come out in our monthly minutes. It is scheduled for July 27 in the morning . FFI Roy Wolff 651 698 2812.

Keith Ellison Forum discusses U.S. drone policy

by Joan Johnson

Since 2004, the use of drones by the U.S. Military, CIA and NATO has become widely promoted in the mainstream media as a “precise” strategy of eliminating military targets with “minimal civilian casualties.” It is also promoted because it keeps troops out of danger. President Obama and CIA Director John Brennan insist that U.S. drone strikes are “surgical” and “do not put innocent men, women and children in danger.” In reality, the physical distance between the drone and its shooter makes the lack of precision unavoidable and has caused countless civilian casualties in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia and the Philippines.

The U.S. completely violates the sovereignty of these nations, flying killer drones through their airspace. In March of this year, the European Parliament heard a special briefing on the U.S. kill programs from the ACLU’s Hina Shamsi and the UN’s special rapporteur on counterterrorism and human rights, Ben Emmerson. By this time, the U.S. had reportedly killed 4,700 people in “war on terror” operations outside of declared war zones, a significant proportion being civilian deaths. Following the briefing, parliamentarians issued a statement that urged the U.S. “to address the pressing questions over the legal criteria at the basis of a policy that, in targeting so-called militants, destroys both innocent human beings and our common legal heritage.”

An independent research site, Pakistan Body Count, states that 3,157 Pakistani people have been murdered and 1,222 injured as a result of drone strikes, and the numbers are growing (www.pakistanbodycount.org). According to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, since President Obama took office, there have been dozens of Pakistani civilians killed in follow-up strikes while helping the drone victims and also mourners walking in funeral processions (www.thebureauinvestigates.com). A *St. Paul Pioneer Press* article (May 30, 2010) described a drone strike earlier that year in Afghanistan that killed 23 civilians in a convoy, including many women and children.

On April 3, 2013, Rep. Keith Ellison hosted a “U.S. Drone Policy” panel discussion, followed by a Question/Answer session. Veterans For Peace Chap. 27 was one of the main promoters of this event. Robert Naiman, Policy Director of Just Foreign Policy debated John Radsan,

Founder/Director, National Security Forum at William Mitchell School of Law on the topic of drones in military conflicts. I recently asked a few VFP members for their written reflections on format, participants, educational impact and possible future events.

Both Greg Hagen and Dave Logsdon said that they appreciated the discussion’s format, “with the exception of too much Naiman,” according to Greg (during the Q & A), “and not enough opportunity for questions and dialogue from the audience.” He also thought it was “very good to have someone from both sides of the issue — otherwise it’s

just us talking to each other and nobody gains anything from that. John Radsan was a pleasant surprise,” he added. “I expected a far more hawkish and adamantly pro-drone response from him, but he seemed like a reasonable

High ranking officials in the U.S. government have committed war crimes, they continue to pose a threat to people elsewhere in the world, and the United States is unwilling or unable to apprehend them.

person that you could have an intelligent conversation with.” Dave was impressed by Keith’s natural ability at moderating and the great turn-out (standing room only).

To answer my question about the forum’s educational impact, Greg responded that he “didn’t learn anything new about the drone program from this event,” but surmised that “based on some of the questions asked, there were a number of people who hadn’t heard much of this information before.” Dave, who suspected that most of the attendees were “anti-drone,” said that he personally “got a lot more drone insight from Mubarak Zeb’s presentation at the U of MN [earlier this year].”

However, he said it was good to get the discussion out in the public setting, “and the fact that Congressman Ellison initiated the forum was significant.” When asked about future forum topics, Greg said that he would like to see a forum on the Israeli-Palestinian issue, asking, “Why the unconditional support for Israel? Clearly our support for Israel is a primary factor for much of the anti-U.S. sentiment throughout the world.”

Mike Madden submitted the following thoughts: “I went into the forum of the opinion that the Obama drone strike program was unwise, unethical and illegal. It is unwise because it is creating more enemies of the United States than it eliminates. It is unethical because of all the civilian casualties. It is illegal because it uses military force outside of recognized areas of armed conflict where there is

Drones, cont’d page 9

no imminent threat to the United States in violation of the Kellogg-Briand Pact, the U.N. Charter, and the Nuremberg Principles.”

Mike discusses specific practices within the program that are immoral, illegal and in violation of the Geneva Conventions, namely “double tap strikes,” which are “successive strikes that kill victims of the initial strike and their rescuers,” (as described by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism above) and “signature strikes” – “those which target people for suspicious patterns of behavior” (e.g., funeral processions in Pakistan or the 23-civilian convey in Afghanistan). He reminds us that “parties to a conflict are required to distinguish between civilians and combatants, and when there is doubt, the person is to be considered a civilian.”

Mike said that both panelists “agreed that the drone strike program was in need of reform, but scant attention was paid to any legal arguments that might constrain it.” He said he had “low expectations of Mr. Radsan going in, but when the program's legality was finally called into question, Mr. Naiman, ostensibly the dove of the two experts, said that there is little regard for international law in Washington D.C. these days. While that statement is undoubtedly true in this arrogant age of American exceptionalism, it was a disappointment to me. I had hoped that what we know about the program could be examined for its compliance with the law. I had hoped that the obvious violations would bring demands of accountability. I had hoped to hear calls for an end to this unlawful program, not its reform. If we concede that the President is above the law, we concede to tyranny.”

Mike was impressed by the “knowledgeable and passionate audience, in particular, Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer, who questioned why it would not be permissible for other nations to carry out targeted killings inside the United States. Using the very criteria contained in the Department of Justice White Paper, (Jack) pointed out that high ranking officials in the U.S. government have committed war crimes, they continue to pose a threat to people elsewhere in the world, and that the United States is unwilling or unable to apprehend them.”

When asked about input on possible future forums, Mike replied, “I think it would be worthwhile to follow up with Representative Ellison on this topic. This time we should have an international law expert like Mary Ellen O'Connell on the panel to explain how the laws of war apply to the drone strike program. I believe such a perspective would demonstrate that the law coincides with the peace community's moral judgement on targeted killing by hellfire missile.”

VFP 28th Annual Convention

Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about the VFP 28th annual convention, this year called “POWER TO THE PEACEFUL.”

It will take place August 7-11, 2013 at the Madison Concourse Hotel & Governor's Club in Madison, WI.

You can register for the convention two ways. Go online to <http://www.vfpnationalconvention.org/>. That page will explain how to register online or how to download the registration form and mail it to VFP National, 216 S. Meramec Ave., St. Louis MO 63105.

The cost for full “supporter” registration is \$200. The alternative option for full registration is \$100. Please note that one- and two-day registrations are also available, for \$25 and \$50 respectively. It is also possible to buy tickets for the Friday night banquet only, for \$40 a plate.

The convention price includes the Friday Night Banquet. You will be asked to make your banquet selection when you register. For a complete listing of entrees, visit the <http://www.vfpnationalconvention.org/register.htm>

See you in Madison.

War on women from page 6

the War on Terror lasting for the next 100 years.

Are we ready for the wars to continue or will men be willing to come forward and start the process to ending not only warfare, but the war against women? In a recently released Pentagon report of the 26,000 sexual assaults for 2012, 14,000 were against men and 12,000 against women. Now, what does this say on the whole about what is going on in our military? What is the toxic soup our men in uniform are drinking, or are the only men joining the military sexual deviants?

If IBM, Chrysler, Fairview or 3M had this level of rapes and sexual violence, they would be put out of business. Perhaps the toxin is violence, the type needed to kill other people around the world who did not attack or threaten this country at all.

Changing Address?

If you are moving please let us know, so you can receive your newsletter. Even if you leave a forwarding address with the post office, it still may cost us an additional \$ 1.10 each time so please let us know. Thank you

EVENTS CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS

Second Sunday each month, 6-8:30 pm:

VFP Chapter 27 general meeting,

1806 Riverside Ave., #3A.

Executive meeting at 5 p.m.

FFI: Larry Johnson at 612-747-3904.

5-6 pm Weds. Lake Street/Marshall Ave. Bridge vigil.

OTHER EVENTS

Sat. July 13. Peacestock at Paul and Trudie Schafer's farm near Hager City, WI. See article below for details. FFI: Bill 651-388-7733.

Aug 6-11. VFP National Convention Madison, WI. (If your National membership is due, please renew to one of the most active peace organizations in the world.)

Tues. Aug 6. 7:30 Hiroshima Remembrance at the Lake Harriet Peace Garden, Mpls.

Tues. Aug 27. Kellogg-Briand Celebration. St Paul. See article on page five for details.

For information on vigils, go to the VFP website at vfpchapter27.org or call 612-827-5364 or visit www.worldwidewamm.org

Support Mayday Books

Find a wide range of books and periodicals at 15% off cover price. All the time!

301 Cedar Ave., West Bank
(downstairs under the bike shop)

Mayday Books has been a consistent and significant supporter of Chapter 27 for many years. The volunteer staff has provided help with mailings and has donated books for the use of our group. It is also a great place to drop in and have a cup of coffee and talk with whomever happens to be there and find that book you have been looking for.

Hours: M-F noon to 7 p.m., Sat. noon to 6 p.m.

Jeremy Scahill's *Dirty Wars* opens June 21

by Coleen Rowley

Jeremy Scahill recently released a new book and film, *Dirty Wars*, which takes us inside America's new covert wars. The foot soldiers in these battles operate globally and inside the United States with orders from the White House to do whatever is necessary to hunt down, capture or kill individuals designated by the president as enemies.

Here's what David Swanson says in his recent film review: "There's no end to the pro-war movies we're subjected to: countless celebrations of bombs, guns, and torture. They come in the form of cartoons, science-fiction, historical fiction, dramas, and reenactments pre-censored by the CIA. Movies show us the excitement without the suffering. War in our theaters resembles almost anything else more than it resembles war."

Dirty Wars won the Cinematography Award for U.S. Documentary at the Sundance Film Festival 2013 and, recently, the Grand Jury Prize at the Boston Independent Film Festival. Variety calls it "jaw-dropping ... [with] the power to pry open government lockboxes." The Sundance jury said it is "one of the most stunning looking documentaries [we've] ever seen."

The film opens on June 21 at the Lagoon Theater in Minneapolis and is expected to be shown for a week but will depend upon ticket sales. Give this movie your support!

Peacestock takes place July 13

Peacestock will take place July 13 at the Windbeam Farm in Hager City, Wisconsin.

This year, speakers include: William Blum, author, recipient of Project Censored's Exemplary Journalism awards in 2009 and publisher of the monthly newsletter, Anti-Empire Report; Jack Nelson Pallmeyer, Associate Professor of Justice and Peace Studies at the University of St. Thomas; Kathy Kelly peace activist, pacifist, author and founder of Voices in the Wilderness, and now a co-leader and co-founder of Voices for Creative Nonviolence; and Misty Rowan, poet, activist and member of the Anti War Committee

Also included in the ticket price are supper and the opportunity to gather with other peaceniks and speak out. Camping space is available at no extra cost. For more info go to www.peacestockvfp.org or call Bill Habedank at 651 388-7733.

Memorial Day, from page 1 SOA protests Nov. 22-24

of two casualties from war. Both men were honored and remembered.

John Varone did his usual fine job of providing a healing Native American peace pipe ceremony for Becky and her family and for Kenny and his family.

VFP's service may resemble other services on Memorial Day, but what makes ours different is that we attempt to remember all casualties of war, not just the soldiers. Other veterans' organizations don't question the rights or wrongs of wars but only honor those who have served. We at VFP ask questions and do our best to work to end war and its madness so we don't continue to increase the number of people we need to honor and remember. This is not to say members from other organizations don't also work for peace in their own way. But we at VFP feel it's important to talk about the full costs of war.

We also want to remember our members who are still with us and struggling with severe health issues: Bob Heberle, Andy Berman, Charlie Bloss, and Jim Steinhagen. If there are others we are not aware of, please contact the VFP office with their names.

Our thoughts and prayers also go out to Thomas Young, the brave young Iraq War vet, who had decided to end his life after struggling with severe health issues after being shot in the back his first day in Iraq. Thomas has gone from being paraplegic to quadriplegic, basically unable to care for himself. (See the documentary *Body Of War*). Thomas had decided to stop feeding himself, but due to pressure from others, he has now apparently reversed that decision.

Oak Ridge Y 12 Trial

by Steve McKeown

Greg Boertje-Obed, Michael, and Sister Megan Rice are awaiting sentencing on Sept 23 for their Plowshares Disarmament action at the Nuclear Bomb Reprocessing facility in Oak Ridge, Tenn.

They are facing heavy time as they dared to enter in the sacred space of nuclear idolatry and shed light on the fragility of the whole nuclear apparatus there and enraged the priestcraft of nuclear insecurity dependence everywhere.

A good website to go to is TRANSFORM NOW PLOWSHARES (transformnowplowshares.wordpress.com) for inspiration and suggestions on how to help.



Chapter 27 will again be chartering a bus to Fort Benning GA this November to protest the SOA. We will have more in the next issue.

"War deprivation has never caused a single case of post traumatic stress."

- from a 2012 Armistice Day talk in California by David Swanson, author of *"War is a Lie and When the World Outlawed War"*



Veterans for Peace, Inc., Chapter 27
1806 Riverside Ave., #3A.
Minneapolis, MN 55454

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Summer 2013 Newsletter

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SUPPORT THE TROOPS! BRING THEM HOME ALIVE NOW!

As of June 4, 2013:
4,422 dead in Iraq and
2,225 combat deaths in Afghanistan.

An estimated 18-22 veterans commit suicide each day,
amounting to 35,770 over the past five years.

Carlos Arredondo Runs to Help Boston Bombing Victims



photo by Chante Wolf

by Chante Wolf

Gold Star Families for Peace member, Carlos Arredondo, ran to aid Boston Marathon victim Jeff Bauman and became a national hero overnight. He is seen in his cowboy hat (above right) and running next to Jeff, holding the artery of one of his two blown off legs and at the 2008 National Convention (above left).

Gold Star Families for Peace statement: "We as families of soldiers who have died as a result of war are organ-



Reuters photo

izing to be a positive force in our world to bring our country's sons and daughters home from Iraq, [and] to minimize the human cost of this war. . . "

Carlos first made headlines in 2004, when his eldest son,

Alexander,

was killed in action in Iraq on his second combat tour. After the Marines notified him of his loss, the distraught father accidentally set the Marine van on fire with him inside it. Suffering from burns on 26 percent of his body, he attended his son's funeral on a medical stretcher with two medical aides at his side.

His second son, Brian, killed himself December 19th, 2011 after years of battling depression and drug use resulting from the death of his older brother.