



# 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 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)



VFP presented this blimp in the MayDay Parade with its connection between oil, climate and war. Vern Hall holds the reins.

## War, climate and oil tied together in VFP MayDay float

by Mary McNellis

This past May 1st, VFP Chapter 27 again unfurled their banners during the annual MayDay Parade, which lumbers down Bloomington Avenue to Powderhorn Park. The day was special in that the parade was actually held on May Day, and the sunny, beautiful weather could not have been more ideal! This year's theme was Climate Change.

A couple dozen VFP members and supporters marched alongside a blimp that we acquired from National VFP Boardmember Tarak Kauff, who organized its use during the Climate March in New York City. One side of the blimp reads: "U.S. Military – Largest Consumer of Oil – Largest Emitter of CO2." The other side makes the connection between oil wars, climate warming and climate wars (see picture above). Alongside a half-dozen VFP flags, Barry Reisch carried a placard stat-

ing: "U.S. Military = #1 Polluter."

The concept, acquisition and use of the blimp was not without controversy. Could we afford to have it shipped to us? Was it too big? Would the parade organizers approve a blimp? Given that we were warned it had leaks, could we even inflate it? As evidenced by the photo, the answer was "yes," thanks primarily to the vision, determination and persistence of Bruce Berry. We've dubbed it "the little blimp that could."

And thanks to the efforts of Barry Reisch, Craig Wood and others who showed up more than two hours before the parade, the blimp was – more or less – successfully inflated, with over 100 helium-filled balloons stuffed into its belly, topped off with compressed air. Despite rolls of duct tape frantically applied en route in an effort to stop leaks, a few marchers

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## MayDay, from page 1



*The MayDay blimp presents little known facts to the public. Paula Staff in photo.*

during this Heart of the Beast event spent time underneath the belly of the beast helping keep it afloat. This author was one of them, frankly relieved to have some shade from the sun.

Special kudos to new participants: Thomas Bauch, John McLeod, Michael Kelly and Ron Moor. Thanks also to old-timers Dave Logsdon, Mike Madden, Vern Hall, Steve McKeown, Jim Brown, Charlie Bloss, Doug Drews, Ron and Paula Staff, Ward Brennan and his new bride. Roger "Garbanzo" Cuthbertson, along with a buddy,

accompanied us the entire route while playing their fiddles.

As in years past, our unit was enthusiastically greeted by the crowds, receiving huge rounds of applause, shouts of approval, and peace salutes. We careened our way past the park entrance towards the lake, landing our limping leviathan on a grassy knoll. Excited children grabbed the colored balloons as it was disemboweled. Our 2015 unit – a cart filled with hand-cast bronze bells that were rung along the way – was very popular; this year's entry even more so. It's going to be hard to top this in 2017!



*VFP members at the MayDay parade.*

## Notes from the President

by Dave Logsdon

*"Power concedes nothing without a demand."*

*—Frederic Douglass*

I recently stayed at a place in Baltimore right across the street from Frederic Douglass' home, which makes the quote above quite appropriate since I'm headed to Washington to participate in the National VFP lobbying effort. The "Bell Tower" that many of us remember from the National Convention in Asheville, North Carolina, will be setting up near the Lincoln Memorial. I plan to take a couple shifts during my stay. I can't seem to escape those bells!

*"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement.  
Nothing can be done without hope and confidence."*

*—Helen Keller*

"Mr. Optimism" has been put to the test in these last few months! The chaos of moving the office, the loss of one of our most beloved and valuable members (Wayne Wittman), and the changing of the guard in our e-blasts and web page caretakers, has been vexing. Fortunately, our chapter is blessed (I don't use that word lightly) with some amazing,

creative, visionary, and devoted people. Often times I feel like the chapter "chew toy." I understand that goes with the job, but all these powerful souls that surround me, continue to lift me higher than I've ever been lifted before!

My God, we had a blimp at the May Day parade! Thanks to Bruce for the idea and Barry and Craig for the sweat equity, plus all the VFPers who showed up at the parade. I couldn't have been prouder to be associated with these men and women.

*"I long to accomplish a great and noble task,  
but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks  
as if they were great and noble."*

*—Helen Keller*

These past three months at the chapter, we have seen the importance of the small details that first John Sherman so ably took care of on a daily basis until struck down by a stroke. Wayne jumped in, as he so often did, to do so many of the daily but important duties that most of us took for granted. With the loss of Wayne, personally, I've grown to appreciate the importance of these often unglamorous jobs.

It is heartening to me to see some of the newer members picking up the oars and start rowing. The return of John Varone, past President of VFP, as our new treasurer is huge! With the new energies added to the stalwart visionary VFP lifers like Steve McKeown and Barry Riesch, our chapter faces an exciting future at our new digs at 4200 Cedar. Thanks to everyone for putting up with my "unique" leadership style! PEACE OUT!

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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.

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## Positive feedback from speech at Benilde

by Dick Foley

I was invited to speak to social justice classes at Benilde-St. Margaret's High School. I spoke to three separate classes on March 15, 2016. My approach was to introduce myself as "The Anti-Recruiter." I told them that I have total respect for anyone thinking about joining the military or if they have family members in the military.

But I also told them that I would tell them things they will never hear from any military recruiter. I told them that I am not telling the "gospel" according to Dick Foley, but it is my story and it's not a pleasant one. Young people are charged with making critical decisions that involve critical thinking. My approach is to tell of my experiences and how negatively life-altering the whole experience has been and continues to be.

An explanation of the draft was given, and I then told of how dehumanizing basic training was. I told of how horrible my living conditions in the field were in Vietnam. I related the more than 40 mortar and rocket attacks I experienced, as well as being overrun by Viet Cong twice and being sniped at up in helicopters and on convoys around a dozen times.

Probably the most intense part of my lesson is telling of "The Worst Day of My Life" when we were overrun, my captain was killed, and I was ordered to shoot three young wounded Viet Cong. We threw 18 bodies in a mass grave. I told of the ongoing problems I have to this day from the whole experience, such as being 70 percent disabled because of PTSD, anxiety and depression.

I conclude by telling of my years of sobriety, my volunteering at the VA Hospital and visiting an inmate at the Oak Park Heights, maximum security, correctional facility. If I had time at the end, I took some questions and tried my best to answer them.

I was one of three speakers that week and the teacher then asked them to choose one of the speakers and to write a paper on their favorite speaker. Sixty-six students chose to write about me, and the teacher sent me copies of those papers. The papers were so moving and inspiring to me that

I broke down in tears three times while reading them.

In their school newspaper the teacher was quoted as saying, "Foley's story was the most impactful. The things he had to go through in the war were horrific. Foley talked about how getting feedback from kids is really helpful for his healing process."

The following are some excerpts from those student papers:

*"The main point that I took away from your speech was that this war was completely unnecessary and incredibly violent. I think it truly made me appreciate the brutality of war in general, but this one specifically."*

*"Your stories were inspirational, fascinating and emotionally engaging."*

*"Out of all the speakers that have come to our class, you're the only one that stood out to me and the one I will always remember."*

*"One thing that stuck out to me in your speech was when you answered the question, 'What was one good thing you took away from your time in the army?' and your reply was simple and blunt – 'nothing.'"*

*"Your story was very compelling. It was very new to me to hear a war story from an individual with an anti-war perspective because I have never heard war stories this way. For me it was very moving."*

*Probably the most intense part of my lesson is telling of "The Worst Day of My Life" when we were overrun, my captain was killed and I was ordered to shoot three young wounded Viet Cong. We threw 18 bodies in a mass grave.*

I've been invited back to Benilde for next fall. I've had similar ongoing talks at Cretin-Derham Hall and the teacher also sends me copies of students' papers. For me, those papers are like gold. They are truly the most healing, therapeutic things that have happened to me since returning from Viet Nam in December of 1968. The students are polite, attentive, reflective and let me know that my message has truly been heard and will be remembered and talked about!

## In memoriam Father Dan Berrigan

by Steve McKeown

Over 2,000 people attended the funeral at St Francis Xavier in New York City of Father Dan Berrigan, who died at the age of 94 on April 30th. I have taken some excerpts from a very moving article written by Jeremy Varon that can be googled called



“The Death Stops Here. The Death and Resurrection of Daniel Berrigan,” written May 12, 2016. Varon said that the “sacrament of resistance” that Berrigan lived was the theme of Father Stephen Kelley, another war resistor who gave the homily, and that humor led the tribute.

After thanking the medical staff that cared for Berrigan during his extended convalescence, Kelley welcomed the FBI detail that may well have been in the church. “Dan Berrigan. Funeral. Resurrection. Now you can close your file.” In this levity was a coy message to the Jesuit establishment whether present or watching the simulcast on a prominent Jesuit website.

Dan's sister in law Liz McAlister recited the words that Dan wrote in preparation for the burning of draft files with homemade napalm in Catonsville, and later spoke to the trial judge. This was an action that Chapter 27 member George Mische participated in and also was one of the catalysts for bringing about.

Liz read :

“Our apologies good friends for the fracture of good order  
the burning of paper instead of children . . .  
we could not, so help us God, do otherwise . . .  
We say killing is disorder  
life and gentleness and community and usefulness  
is the only order we recognize . . .  
How many indeed must die before our voices are heard  
how many must be tortured dislocated  
starved murdered . . .  
We have chosen to say with the gift of liberty  
if necessary our lives: the violence stops here  
the death stop here  
the suppression of the truth stops here  
this war stops here.”

## This war business “The merciless savages”

by Tom Dooley

Fort Snelling needs a re-do according to the Minnesota Historical Society. They are asking for \$34 million to revitalize the Visitor Center. This is a good idea from the “historical” perspective but a different view from the political angle.

A “fort” is a military installation to protect and defend against an enemy. Or to facilitate advancing an occupation. In this case, making it safe for the “settlers,” the same term is used by the Israelis when moving the Palestinians out of the way.

In Minnesota, the most shameful act was the hanging of members of the tribe who had killed settlers. There were other tribe members to be hanged, but President Lincoln let them off.

In the same issue of the *Star Tribune* that had the Historical Society article (March 30) there was a write-up about the Little Earth community in Minneapolis near 25th and Cedar Ave., which said, “Indigenous women held captive at the Fort Snelling concentration camp following the hangings.”

In discussions about the length of wars the U.S. has waged, including Viet Nam, Iraq, and Afghanistan, no war comes close to the length of the wars on indigenous people, which have been going on since 1492, five hundred and 24 years. In our Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson referred to them as “the merciless Indian savages.”

A letter from a Brit to *The Economist of London* dated May 26, 2001, explains U.S. feelings about Native Americans:

*“America has not yet decolonized and continues to act in a brutal imperialist fashion in many parts of the world. But what can one expect from a nation whose creation involved the genocide of one race and the subjugation of another?”*  
David Short Johannesburg”

## Giving hope and courage to children with stories of peace and justice

by Larry Johnson

During nuclear proliferation, Yale psychologist Robert Lifton spoke with a group of children about fear. Most were horrified by network news talk about the nuclear threat, but one boy said, "I'm not afraid because my mom and dad and a lot of their friends are working hard to make sure that stuff never happens." Clearly, their story gave him hope. When I was a child, the only adult in my life who spoke straight about war, without the rhetoric, was my grandfather. He was teaching my brother and me how and why we show respect for the flag, and he broke down, saying, "Boys, war is a horrible thing. I was in World War I, and my brother died there, and I hope neither of you ever have to participate."

I'm a veteran who believes war should be the ultimate last resort. Really, I believe WAR SHOULD NOT HAPPEN AT ALL. I spent years in education because I'm always running into adults who remember stories they heard as children. I believe that telling peace and justice stories to younger children creates a connection of hope and courage that prepares them to stay positive and be activists in dealing with world problems as adults. Here are just a few books, available in the library, to read or tell to kids on these topics:

*Why War is Never a Good Idea* by Alice Walker. Yes, by the author of *The Color Purple*, this rhyming tale, beautifully illustrated, tells young children the truth in a way they can grasp it.

*The Peace Bell* by Margi Preus. Yoko's grandma tells her how the bell that once rang in their village was taken as scrap metal for the war effort, but somehow made its way back to become "The Peace Bell."

*Shooting at the Stars* by John Hendrix. A new picture book, with a soldier writing home to mom about the amazing World War I Christmas Eve truce he found himself a part of.

*The Mighty Prince* by Yasoo Takeichi. A little girl teaches a mean, warring emperor to be happy and grow flowers. She persuades him it's better than hurting people and beating up on other countries.

*Horton Hears a Who* by Dr. Seuss. Sounding like a goofy Dr. Seuss rhyme, it's really a story of listening and mobilized speaking out to prevent unnecessary destruction to people by people. It was Horton who said, "A person's a person, no matter how small."

*The Crows of Pearblossom* by Aldous Huxley. (Yes, *Brave New World*). Mr. and Mrs. Crow want to kill the snake eating their unhatched eggs. Collaboration creates a nonviolent strategy to stop the killing.

*Sadako's Cranes* by Judith Loske. An easy picture book version of the true story of the bombing of Hiroshima, made famous by Eleanor Coerr's *Sadako* and the 1000 Paper Cranes for older young people.

*Coubertin's Olympics. How the Games Began* by Davida Kristy. Again, a "juvenile" book about Pierre de Coubertin, pushing for physical education so France would stop losing wars. He then went full circle, reviving the ancient Greek Olympics in 1896. His idea: worldwide athletic competition to replace war.

So look these up and read or tell them to children or grandchildren. Tell your own stories, and think about it. De Coubertin's idea, replacing war with international athletic competition, hasn't worked out yet, maybe because so few know the story. Who knows when a child might grab on to it and not let go as an adult till it's done?

### WORLD BEYOND WAR

VFP members Leah Bolger, Bruce Gagnon, and Paul Chappell are among the impressive International Speakers Bureau headed up by David Swanson.

It is worth CHECKING out and SUPPORTING this bureau.

[www.worldbeyondwar.org/speakers/](http://www.worldbeyondwar.org/speakers/)

## Wayne Wittman: VFP was his “Ticket to Heaven”

by Mary McNellis

This past February 24th, Veterans for Peace lost Wayne Wittman, one of our most active, respected and beloved members. Besides being a founding member of VFP Chapters 27 and 127, he was also a founding member of the MN Alliance of Peacemakers. Since 1958 he was active in Local Union 459 and District 77; he was riding home on the MTC from a union board meeting he attended every Wednesday when he suffered a fatal heart attack.

On April 24th, about 50 people came together at our office to pay tribute to Wayne. Before getting down to the business at hand, we broke bread and enjoyed camaraderie with some new acquaintances and others who had not been seen for many years.

Then a handful of VFP members rang bells 11 times for Wayne. In the middle of the room sat an empty chair for him, who was certainly with us in spirit. Draped over the chair was a hooded sweatshirt sporting one of Wayne’s mantras: “Take a stand for Peace/Stop these Wars.”

Then we remembered Wayne. There were many stories, but space only allows relating a few.

Chante Wolf was one of several who commented on Wayne’s ability to fall sleep anywhere. Specifically she recalled the night they camped inside the barn during Peacestock (or Pigstock as it was known at the time). She was mortified by the bugs and rat droppings everywhere. What scared her most, however, was the violent storm that came up during the night, convinced it was a tornado. Through it all, Wayne remained sound asleep by the door, snoring, totally oblivious to the pending disaster. Chante finally woke him up, warning that they were about to be blown away. With typical aplomb he calmly stated, matter-of-factly, “Nothing we can do about it” and went back to sleep. Wayne was not into melodrama; it took a lot to upset him.

A number of stories were told about traveling cross-country with Wayne. Joe Johnson recounted driving cross country to the VFP national convention in Arizona where

Father Roy was organizing SOAW. It involved three days of non-stop driving. Three people took shifts; one person would drive, and then rotate to the passenger seat to keep the next driver awake, and then rotate to the back seat to sleep. Wayne was the only one who was able to sleep. Close to their destination, in the middle of the night, the driver couldn’t stay awake and the front-seat passenger was asleep, so he pulled over to rest. It was only a few minutes after stopping that Wayne got out of the back seat into the driver’s seat, said they didn’t have time to rest, and proceeded to drive the rest of the way.



Several people spoke about Wayne being the “captain” of the bus trips that he organized to Fort Benning, showing videos, telling stories, converting students (and others) to a life of activism. Sister JoAnn Sturzl recalled her first bus ride. “Wayne was

important in my life; a role model and an inspiration. It was because of him that I was an election observer in El Salvador in 2009. We were on the bus to Fort Benning in 2008. When we each got up to introduce ourselves, this is what he said: ‘I’m Wayne Wittman and I’m addicted to El Salvador.’”

Others spoke about Wayne continuing his mission down here from on high. “Wayne is everywhere.” “He’s still here, guiding us with his gentle hand.” Doug Drews recounted the story that while ringing bells at Wayne’s burial at Fort Snelling, the woman in charge there asked Steve McKeown “Who are ‘Vets for Peace’? She seemed to have trouble believing we were not going to have the rifles fired, but she asked, ‘Do you have a website?’” Steve smiled, thinking “So Wayne is still recruiting!”

Steve remarked that a month later the notice came out about the Pope having a meeting at the Vatican to discuss whether the ‘Just War Theory’ even made sense any more. He figured that was the first place Wayne went when he left us, to the Pope to say, “OK, it’s time to deal with this!”

Another reference to heaven led to a story told by Mike Madden, who remembered walking with Wayne to a bus stop late one night when nobody had a car to take him home.

Wittman, Continued on page 9

# The people make the peace

by Ron Staff

Veterans For Peace holds one's attention because the group, as a whole, thinks, acts and lives outside the Department of Defense box of rocks.

Macalester College hosted a Vietnam Antiwar Symposium just as our group is preparing once again to respond to the Department's multimillion dollar, multi-year commemorative of the war in Vietnam. Our Full Disclosure project throws a few hundred letters archived at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the Mall in Washington up against internet based, biased, pseudo history. The Pentagon "history" begins with the old, tired lie that there was actually a military action by the country of Vietnam against American warships, tauntingly patrolling just outside (and maybe "accidentally," occasionally inside) the 12-mile nautical boundary assigned to all national coast lines in the Gulf of Tonkin.

One understands how our protection-racket like funded, gargantuan military bureaucracy might want to keep hidden in plain sight the truth that the Navy ships Turner and Maddox were the WMD of the 60s. Most of our fellow citizens only slowly become able to understand the actions needed to preserve the democracy which has come down to us.

The wild, entertaining and haltingly forward moving political process (not science) invites each voter to pay some attention to what is happening. Watching the fairness of what occurs around each one of us can provide the guide needed to continue this species-wide endeavor. Around the world most people are drawn to the concept of democracy.

Since this is a truism, those of us in democracies have some kind of obligation to those not yet blessed with this hope; to keep our houses clean and clear about how democracies advance. Sort of like attending to how our governing processes mature and what we can do to humanize the bureaus which spin out from exercising democratic services to us citizens.

Veterans For Peace has attended to the dysfunction of the military side of the military-industrial complex, which has, like a cancer, reached into nearly all aspects of U.S. society. The deepest cancerous mass resides in the secret

budget's of our secret organizations (CIA, DIA, DEA, etc). The funds diverted from our human species into the nuclear rat hole, certainly fulfills a portion of the "spiritual death" foreseen by Doctor King.

Macalester College's efforts to keep clear about the events associated with the American War in Vietnam is a foundational brick in the public historical structure.

Out of their planning and research has come the book, *The People Make the Peace*, savvily edited by Karin Aguililar-San Juan and Frank Joyce. They subtitle it "*Lessons from the Vietnam Antiwar Movement.*" They reached into the antiwar community and sought thoughts to bring forward from 40 years ago. A sort of near-past reflection by many of the actors in "the movement." Certainly not all of those actors, for that group would include hundreds of participants, organizers, "replicators" and independent protestors.

Critics of the war arose all across the social spectrum and found common ground, even participants in the war joined the call away from arms. The following people were asked for a chapter of their thoughts to add to this book: Jay Craven, Rennie Davis, Judy Gumbo, Alex Hing, Doug Hostetter, Frank Joyce, Nancy Kurshan, Myra Macpherson, John McAuliff and Becca Wilson. If you don't recognize many of these folks, what a joyous opportunity it is for you to find out how to be a citizen of a democracy!

Each writer tells his or her own story. It is told in their own way, which can be difficult for some readers as style can manifest as a barrier. It also presents the individuals as they see and think of themselves. The challenge yields more intimacy with their approach to the war experienced by every American over 50 years of age.

The editors claim to "hope this project achieves a tricky combination of pessimism of the mind and optimism of the will." Out of the opposition to the war arose one of the most iconic social observations of all time... "Absolute power corrupts absolutely." In a deeper assessment of democracy, this is absolutely the origin of conceptions of democracy. By keeping those in power on the short leash of re-election, it has been hoped, to modulate that power.

The editors introduction alone brought this writer absolutely new information. The fact that there were Vietnamese students attending colleges in the United States and opposed to the war was unexpected. However, their bravery in the face of the murder of one of their number, Nguyen Thai Binh, as he arrived in Saigon after being deported from the United States for showing his antiwar

## 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 Thank you

Symposium, Continued on next page



## Wittman, from page 7

When Mike complimented Wayne's dedication to pursuing his peace activities in spite of being unable to drive, Wayne dismissed the compliment saying it wasn't so much dedication; rather the work for VFP was his "ticket to heaven."

Many said they knew his wife Joan first. Brigid McDonald told the story about Wayne moving into Carondelet Village, inhabited primarily by retired nuns. They have a group called Bread and Roses, all women. Undaunted by the gender barrier "Wayne wanted in," said Brigid, so in he went, integrating the group. What Wayne wanted, he usually got!

Bruce Stahlberg, who worked with Wayne on 911 Truth says, "What an honor in this life to have gotten to know Wayne and work with him in his tireless search for peace, justice and truth. He didn't need to be asked to step up to

help, he just always did, raising his hand and following through."

Union activist Richard Ryan perhaps sums up Wayne's legacy best: "All of us are better for knowing Wayne and poorer now that he is gone. But, he's not really gone of course; wherever someone stands up against injustice, he will be there. Whenever someone speaks out against tyranny and oppression, Wayne's voice will be heard. In the end, all that's left is the effect we've had on other people's lives. Wayne showed us how to be giants."

The memorial concluded with the joining of hands, joining voices in song, surrounding Wayne's empty chair with love, returning to our homes holding him in our hearts. ¡PRESENTE, Wayne!

## Symposium, from previous page

message as he crossed the stage to receive his diploma from the University of Washington in 1972 no longer remains as a deeply held secret. Still, it is unknown to virtually all Americans.

In a top line democracy wouldn't someone have wanted to know the source of his opinion? Could he have opined something to the effect that the "government in the south was merely a broken down old colonial administration with no governing experience."

One wonders if it will be included in the "commemorative history?" Wouldn't it be wise to keep such acts in the forefront of national self assessments. Of course in war, truth is the first casualty. After the war a measured assessment is indeed required in order to permit navigation away from the exigencies of war to the nurturing of peace. Two different human engagements.

The Symposium brought all the story tellers together for questioning by current college students, some involved in "Black Lives Matter," as we all approach the simmering discussions of classism, racism, segregation, equality, militarism, equity, the whole map to mutual respect and reverence. Each person has challenges. How do we and our institutions assist or inhibit these conflicts?

The Symposium's four meetings allowed the students to show their understandings from research, meet the authors of each chapter, have a conversation across an historic gulf and present their current work in continuing or igniting public conversations to invigorate our country.

Immigrant representatives from across the war zone

stated their current immigrant experience concerns. The children and grandchildren of the war's diaspora now add their voices and announce their presence with clarity of mind and invite the rest of U. S. Americans to meet them as the peers they are.

Veterans For Peace rang bells 11 times at each of the gatherings. The end of war action added a small reflective piece to a wonderful academic effort. How fortunate we were to be allowed in on the coattails of a long and fruitful effort.

Thanks to Karin Aguilar-San Juan, Frank Joyce, each author, all the young local activists, the student scholars and those participants who benefited from the efforts of others. It was certainly a great series of events.

**You know, if Congress and  
President Eisenhower had been  
honest in their efforts in 1954,  
they wouldn't have changed  
Armistice Day to Veteran's Day,  
they would have called it Cannon  
Fodder Day.**

**-Mike Madden**

## *The Peace Index*

# Each day, DOD spends at least \$1.4 billion

by Frank Fuller

Each day, the Department of Defense spends about \$1.4 billion. This is just its basic budget. But if you include past or current wars, nuclear weapon maintenance and upgrades, the VA, the war against ISIS, Homeland Security and the FBI's fight against terrorism, DOD spends about \$2.1 billion a day. What caught my eye on this subject was partly the fact that this election year, the two leading contenders for president are so hawkish that even these outrageous amounts might not be enough daily spending for them.

So let's take a quick look at a few things that aren't being done well because we don't have the money.

### **Bonding bills**

This year, a bonding bill was proposed in Minnesota which would have spent \$1.6 billion over 10 years to repair and maintain roads, bridges, state buildings and other infrastructure. As of this writing, the legislature ended its session without any agreement on this. One day of the defense budget could have paid for 10 years of infrastructure maintenance and repair, and some legislators said that is money we do not have. I have to admit that is kind of depressing.

### **Drinking water**

The best known water issue right now is the lead contamination in the Flint, Mich., water system. Most people know the story: To save money, Republican-appointees made decisions that increased the levels of lead in the city water and then ignored the issue for months, again to save money. Flint isn't the only city that has a lead problem, however. The Environmental Protection Agency has said that \$384 billion will be needed by 2030 to keep drinking water safe, and much of that problem is due to lead pipes that need replacing. That's about \$27 billion a year, which is about 20 days of DOD spending.

But that is not the only problem with our drinking water. Just this month, Fairmount, Minn., had to issue a warning to residents not to give city water to infants under six months because of high nitrate levels. Excess nitrates can cause lasting problems or death in infants. Nitrates are, of course, used in fertilizers for farms and residential lawns. There is some controversy over which is the main source of the contamination, but this problem does show that threats to drinking water can come in many different forms.

But a country that spends \$1.4 billion a day on war

should be able to find some money to provide drinkable water for everyone.

Overall, In 2013, the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators said federal officials had slashed drinking-water grants, 17 states had cut drinking-water budgets by more than a fifth, and 27 had cut spending on full-time employees. "The cumulative effect of the resource gap has serious implications for states' ability to protect public health," the group stated in the *New York Times*.

Adjusted for inflation, the \$100 million (About an hour and a half of DOD's budget) annual budget of the E.P.A.'s drinking water office has fallen 15 percent since 2006, and the office has lost more than a tenth of its staff.

### **Zika**

In February, the Obama administration sought \$1.8 billion to fight the Zika virus, the mosquito-borne virus that has been linked to birth defects and brain damage in infants born to infected mothers and to paralysis in adults. But it seems that one day of war is more important than protecting Americans from a virus that has already reached our shores. Nearly 700 people, 64 of them pregnant women, have been infected here at home.

What Republicans in Congress have proposed is to take funds not yet spent fighting the ebola virus. Many might remember how panic-stricken Republicans were two years ago when several ebola cases turned up in America. They called for keeping out of the country anyone who had been in African or European countries effected by ebola. Scientists have made inroads against ebola since then, including development of an experimental vaccine. But apparently a day of war is more important than fighting these two different viruses that are proven threats to public health.

### **Opioid addiction**

Opioid and pain killer addiction are in the news because of a sharp increase in addiction and deaths from overdoses. More Americans now die from drug overdoses than from car crashes. Hospitals charged about \$15 billion in 2012 for opioid related inpatient care, and these costs have been going up sharply since then. President Obama has proposed spending \$1.1 billion to combat it: to expand treatment and to develop and expand strategies to combat these overdoses.

That's less than the cost of one day of the DOD. This bill might pass.

## On the wings of a dove

by Joan Johnson

This last April former VFP Chapter President Larry Johnson was one of the lead organizers for a talk featuring Mel Duncan, the cofounder of the Nonviolent Peaceforce. The topic was “Just War . . . An idea whose time has passed.”

Mel had just returned from the Vatican in Rome where he and 24 other experts on nonviolence from around the world were invited by the Pontifical Council and PAX CHRISTI to help the Roman Catholic Church re-examine its Just War Doctrine, which has shaped the Catholic Church’s stance on wars and deeply influenced the way the West has justified wars and violence since the 4th century.

Despite the short notice given for Mel’s talk, Jackman Hall of the Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis was overflowing, and chairs had to be brought in. Mel opened his report by saying that everyone at the conference had their input, and formed a consensus in making a statement. Mel said that according to John Dear, another attendee, “The conference was historic . . . there has never been a gathering like this in the history of the Vatican. For the first time the Catholic Church is discussing abandoning the just war theory and officially returning to Jesus’ way of nonviolence to resolve conflict.” Mel, with his background in the Nonviolent Peaceforce, presented to us at Plymouth some of what he shared at the Vatican which was well received.

The final statement from the conference was approved by Cardinal Turkson, who also participated. The Cardinal was the leader on the Pope’s encyclical on the environment.

He then presented the Statement to the Pope, which is titled: “An Appeal to the Catholic Church to Re-Commit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence.” This can be googled in its entirety, and it is not terribly long. I thought some of the highlights were:

“The time has come for our Church to be a living witness and to invest far greater human and financial resources in promoting a spirituality and practice of active nonviolence, and in forming and training our Catholic communities in effective nonviolent prac-

tices. In all of this, Jesus is our inspiration and model.”

“Clearly the Word of God, the witness of Jesus, should never be used to justify violence, injustice, or war. We confess that the people of God have betrayed this central message of the Gospel many times participating in wars, persecution, oppression, exploitation, and discrimination.”

**“We believe that there is no ‘just war.’ Too often the just war theory has been used to endorse rather than prevent or limit war. Suggesting that a just war is possible also undermines the moral imperative to develop tools and capacities for non-violent transformation of conflict.”**

“In particular we call on Pope Francis to share with the world an encyclical on nonviolence and Just Peace and to continue advocating for the abolition of war and nuclear weapons.”

I conclude that this is as the song “On the Wings of a Dove” suggests, and I hope that sails everywhere are put up to catch this Spirit.

### Just War Addendum

In May Larry Johnson and Steve McKeown spoke to six junior high school religion and theology classes on the Just War Doctrine and Conscientious Objection highlighting Larry Johnson’s CO experience and Steve’s relating the recent conference at the Vatican along with the work of Veterans For Peace.

This is the 17th year VFP has been here, and we continue to be impressed with the work the teachers have done with their students and giving us a chance to share with them. As a part of their service requirements for their class many students go to the Lake St Bridge Vigil, and some have studied the Non Violent Peaceforce as their project.

# The United States Institute of Peace: Is it for peace?

by Mike Madden

On April 12th, 2016, the Humphrey School at the University of Minnesota hosted a presentation titled “Building Peace in a Fragile World” by Nancy Lindborg, President of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). Ms. Lindborg spoke of the need to build peace on a community level. As an example, she cited USIP’s work in Pakistan introducing Madrasa students to their secular counterparts, thus building tolerance and understanding. USIP also works to involve women in peace and reconciliation, because when women are involved, agreements tend to be longer lasting. Such programs to resolve conflict are laudable, but shouldn’t an organization dedicated to peace also seek accountability for crimes against peace?

Citing historic levels of displacement due to violence, Lindborg said that 12 countries produce the bulk of the world’s refugees today. It was striking that most were also countries that are suffering United States and NATO military interventions. Syria, Afghanistan, and Somalia lead the list.

The correlation grows upon further examination. Only Afghanistan produced more refugees than Iraq in the years following the 2003 American-led invasion. Refugees from Pakistan have steadily increased since the first known drone strike there in 2004. The number of refugees fleeing Libya, which peaked in 2011-12 with the violent overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi, is once again on the rise as the civil war there intensifies. Regime change in Libya was designed by the U.S. State Department, led by NATO, and celebrated by then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Yet Lindborg does not mention U.S. foreign policy as a cause of displacement or the violence that drives it. Instead, the causes of violent extremism are “social marginalization, political exclusion, lack of access to justice or resources, and repression or abuse by state and security forces.” While these are undeniably factors, claims of responsibility for terrorist attacks have also cited U.S. military aggression and occupation, mistreatment of Muslim detainees, and drone strikes as motivation. But rather than simply condemn these unlawful acts, Lindborg sees the U.S. security agenda as something that should be “held in balance” because it often “gives extremists another grievance to hook their agenda to,” thereby aiding in their recruitment.

Asked if she considered the Iraq invasion to be an act of

military aggression, Lindborg answered with equivocation: “I’m not a scholar. We’ve all learned a lot of lessons. We all know the reality is not what the action was based upon.”

**This is not a surprising answer coming from the president of an organization whose current chair, Stephen Hadley, was an architect of the Iraq War. He served as a member of the White House Iraq Group (2002) and was responsible for including the false claim that Iraq was seeking nuclear weapons material in the 2003 State of the Union Address.**

In 2005, he replaced Condoleezza Rice to as the National Security Advisor to President George W. Bush. As late as 2014, he wrote a commentary for the *Wall Street Journal* titled “Americans Can Proud of What Was Accomplished in Iraq,” in

which he blamed President Obama for his withdrawal of military forces that could have “mitigate[d] sectarian splits” and provided “two more years of counterterrorism training to meet the re-emerging al-Qaeda threat.”

Earlier in the day, in an appearance on Minnesota Public Radio, host Kerri Miller asked several times in various ways for Lindborg’s view on the U.S. drone policy. Unable to get a straight answer, Miller finally asked, “Are you saying this is too political of an issue for you at the U.S. Institute of Peace to have a view on, or that you yourself don’t have an opinion on how the U.S. uses drones in conflict areas.”

Lindborg responded, “I think there’s a very live conversation underway about do we need to regulate drones, what are the rules of conduct similar to what has been put into place over the last 50 years through the Geneva Conventions in all matters of warfare and right now, drones are quite unregulated and that will be a very important frontier of conversation and negotiation among countries.”

There is no need for any new “regulations” regarding the use of weaponized drones; the existing body of international law is quite sufficient. Regardless of the aircraft that carries it, the delivery of a Hellfire missile into any nation that is not at war, when it occurs against the will of that nation, is an act of military aggression; this is the supreme war crime according to the Nuremberg Principles. Double-tap strikes, secondary drone strikes that target those responding to the initial strike, are an unambiguous violation of the Geneva Conventions, which protect anyone who is injured and all those lending assistance. Extrajudicial

Institute of Peace, Continued on page 14

*Most refugees were from countries that are suffering United States and NATO military interventions. Syria, Afghanistan, and Somalia lead the list.*

*Author to speak in Twin Cities*

# David Swanson

## War is a lie.

David Swanson will speak about the latest developments in the telling and the debunking of lies about wars. He will answer questions and sign copies of his new book, *War is*



*a lie: Second Edition*. This book is refutation of every major argument used to justify wars, focusing on those wars that have been most widely defended as just and good. Swanson will offer suggestions on what can be done to end warmaking.

David Swanson is an author, activist, journalist, and radio host. He is director of WorldBeyondWar.org and campaign coordinator for RootsAction.org. Swanson's books include *War is a Lie* and *When They Outlawed War*.

He blogs at DavidSwanson.org and WarIsACrime.org. He hosts "Talk Nation Radio." He is a 2015 Nobel Peace Prize Nominee.



**Author to Speak in Twin Cities Saturday, June 11, 2016**  
**Potluck: 6 pm; Presentation: 6:30 pm.**

**Macalester Plymouth Church Social Hall, 1658 Lincoln, St Paul, MN**

*Organized by End War Committee of Women Against Military Madness and Veterans for Peace, Chapter 27. For info, call 612-827-5364 or 612-275-2720.*

## Institute of Peace, from page 12

killing, when it occurs outside of a war zone, is a grievous violation of the human rights unless the targeted person poses an imminent threat to the life of another.

Appearing before a U.S. Senate subcommittee, Lindborg testified, "Countries where terror attacks are concentrated are highly correlated with those where the state commits gross human rights abuses, such as extra-judicial killings, according to research underpinning the annual Global Terrorism Index. In countries facing violent extremism, USIP dedicates significant resources to promoting the rule of law and training security services to address the challenges of terrorism and other significant security threats in just and sustainable ways."

A peace activist might be tempted to think that Lindborg was holding a mirror before Congress to explain the causes of terrorism. However, the United States Institute of Peace was founded by Congress, is funded by Congress,

## Border militarization continues

from SOAWaatch newsletter

The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC, formerly known as the School of the Americas), announced that Border Patrol Agent Adalberto Rodriguez was the first U.S. Border Patrol agent to be trained at the institute.

According to a WHINSEC spokesperson, Rodriguez was sent to WHINSEC by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) with the expressed purpose "to gain first-hand knowledge of courses developed and instructed by WHINSEC, and to develop a working relationship between WHINSEC and CBP."

The connection between WHINSEC, the military training school, which has a track record of graduating human rights abusers, and the U.S. Border Patrol is chilling. The institute's role has been to instill a mindset into Latin American security forces that promotes "military solutions" to social problems.

The U.S. Border Patrol already has a serious problem when it comes to the use of excessive force, their culture of impunity, and treating border communities as war zones. Military training at one of the most notorious military training institutions is very much a step in the wrong direction.

and its board members are appointed by Congress. It is more likely that the speaker and audience alike fancy an exceptional America that, for the betterment of the world, is not bound by the law in the same way as lesser nations.

### EVENTS CALENDAR

#### ONGOING EVENTS

At the time of printing we are moving our office. Please contact 612 821 9141 for monthly meeting times.

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

#### OTHER EVENTS

June 11, 6 p.m. potluck dinner, *War is a Lie*  
Talk at 6:30 pm with author David Swanson speaking about the 2nd edition of his book. Macalester Plymouth United Church, 1658 Lincoln Ave., St. Paul. Free will offering.

June 12, 9 and 11 a.m., David Swanson speaking just prior to the Masses at St Joan of Arc, 4537 3rd Av. S., Mpls. David will also speak at this Church's re-dedication of their Peace Pole at 2 pm.

July 9, Peacestock at Red Wing. Tickets avail at 612 821 9141. See ad on opposite page.

Friday, Aug. 5, 7 pm. Commemorative Tea Ceremony at Lyndale Park Peace Garden, Minneapolis. (This is tentative but probable.)

Sat., Aug. 6, 7:30 am. Ceremony of the Cranes, Hiroshima Commemoration, Lyndale Park Peace Garden, music, telling of Sadako story, keynote by Renee Weeks-Wynne, 2015 Kawase fellow, moment of silence at 8:15

Mon., Aug. 8, 7 pm. Nagasaki Commemoration at Global Harmony Labyrinth, Como Park, St. Paul. Music, reading of ON THAT SUMMER DAY, keynote by Renee Weeks-Wynne

Aug. 11-15. National VFP Convention, UC Clark Kerr Campus, Berkeley, CA. Speakers: OLIVER STONE, ANDREW BACEVICH, HELEN CALDICOTT, ANN JONES, ANTONIA JUHASZ, [vfpnationalconvention.org](http://vfpnationalconvention.org)

Aug. 27, Kellogg Briand Day anniversary event. Details will be announced later.

# PEACESTOCK 2016

14th annual event devoted to peace and justice

Sponsored by Veterans for Peace, Chap. 115, Red Wing and Chap. 27, Minneapolis

all day event starting at 9:00 am

Hobgoblin Barn, 920 Hwy. 19 Blvd., Red Wing MN

## Saturday, July 9, 2016

### Terrorism: Definitions, Causes and Effects

#### Todd Green



Dr. Todd Green is an associate professor of European and American religious history and interfaith dialogue at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, where he has taught for eight years. He acquired his PhD at Vanderbilt University. He also teaches in Europe and is the past co-chair of the Religion in Europe Group of the American Academy of Religion.

His most recent book is *The Fear of Islam: An Introduction to Islamophobia in the West*. Dr. Green is also editor of *Islam, Immigration and Identity*.

Dr. Green has appeared regularly on CNN, NPR, Al Jazeera, Reuters as well as others and is a frequent contributor to the Huffington Post.

The title of Dr. Green's Peacestock address will be *Islamophobia: What Are We Really Afraid Of?* His talk will address precisely what we hope bring to light about the problem of terrorism as to its causes and its solutions.



#### Michael German

Michael German is a fellow with the Brennan Center for Justice's Liberty and National Security Program which strives to ensure that our US government respects human rights and freedoms in conducting

the fight against terrorism. Mr. German worked for sixteen years as a special agent with the FBI where he specialized in domestic terrorism and covert operations. He left the FBI in 2004 after whistle blowing on the deficiencies of the FBI's counterterrorism operations. Mr. German then worked with the ACLU in Washington D.C. office.

Included in his published works are *Thinking Like a Terrorist: Insights of a Former FBI Undercover Agent* and *The Terror Factory: Inside the FBI's Manufactured War on Terrorism*. One of his essays was entitled . Why Doesn't the Intelligence Community Care Whether Its Security Programs Work?

The title of Mr. German's talk will be *The Failure of Our Counter-Intelligence Discourse*.

**Additional Speakers TBA – Check our website!**

**Day's events include:** Morning program will be short presentations and workshops (see website for details); noon lunchwagon; evening supper included. Overnight camping available; call for information.

**Cost:** \$30 per person in advance, \$35 at the door; \$50 per couple in advance or \$60 at the door, all inclusive and includes evening meal; \$10 for students

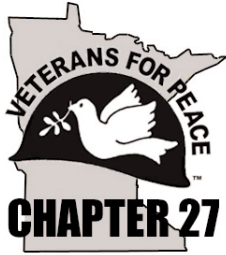
**Event location:** at the Hobgoblin Barn, 920 Hwy. 19 Blvd., Red Wing MN  
[www.hobgoblin-usa.com](http://www.hobgoblin-usa.com)

#### Music with the WILD COLONIAL BOYS

The Wild Colonial Boys (WCB) performed at Peacestocks 2014 and 2015 and are coming back for another encore! A highly acclaimed Irish rock & folk band based in the Twin Cities that plays Irish festivals around the country, WCB says Peacestock is one of the band's favorite gigs: the Peacestock audience is one that actually "listens" to their music. If you go to the Peacestock website you can find video of past performances. [www.wildcolonialboys.com](http://www.wildcolonialboys.com)

**For more information:** [www.peacestockvfp.org](http://www.peacestockvfp.org)

Bill Habedank 651-764-1866 email: [whabedank@yahoo.com](mailto:whabedank@yahoo.com)



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

As of May 28, 2016:

At least 6,882 dead in Iraq and Afghanistan;  
over one million injured veterans (see below).

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

### **Giving silence**

*by Doug Rawlings*

*For my son Josh turning thirteen*

If 'nam vets were ancient shamans  
now would be the moment we'd choose to give  
you shelter  
from the coming storm

But we are merely  
survivors of suburbs and cities  
not forest nor mountain  
Modern men  
offering you our silences  
our words  
to guide you going out on your own

Yet we have known for years now  
that the silences of our fathers will not do

And we have known that words alone  
cannot bleed you free  
of your raging doubts

So listen up  
to what we have found  
between the silences and the words:

Open up your fists

Watch women move

Scorn uniforms

Don't march

Dance