



VETERANS FOR PEACE NEWS

MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL VETERANS FOR PEACE, CHAPTER 27

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

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

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

To subscribe to this newsletter, please call our office:
612-821-9141

Or write:
Veterans For Peace Ch. 27
4200 Cedar Ave, S. #7
Minneapolis, MN 55407

Or e-mail:
vfpchapter27@gmail.com

Our website is:
www.vfpchapter27.org.

Newsletter committee:
Frank Fuller, editor;
Jennie Downey, Jean Heberle, Joan Johnson, Mike Madden, Steve McKeown, Mary McNellis, Barry Riesch, Paula Staff, Ron Staff, Craig Wood

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

Not just another roadside attraction



Steve McKeown and Craig Wood got Stacy Beyer's signature on the ICAN petition. Her town of Johnson, MN (population 29), was the 851st town to be included on the petition, thus completing the goal of reaching every incorporated town/city in Minnesota. Three more Johnson residents signed on that day (Unfortunately no canine signatures allowed). Craig took this picture.

by Craig Wood

Driving a bus with ABOLISH WAR painted on the back of it from South Minneapolis through rural Minnesota can turn heads. Ask Steve McKeown.

McKeown, a Vietnam Vet and local member of Veterans For Peace (VFP) is part of a collaborative effort between Women Against Military Madness (WAMM) and VFP collecting signatures from residents of all 851 incorporated Minnesota towns on a petition to ban nuclear weapons globally. Armed with a clipboard and map of Minnesota mounted on cardboard, he usually drove alone around the hinterlands to sign up folks he'd meet in small towns or at county fairs. He kept accurate tallies and was careful to put stickpins in towns on a map after receiving signatures from each city.

Other times, he'd roam the state with buddies in the newly renovated VFP Chapter 27 bus, stopping to prowl through laundromats,

bars, cafes and bait shops. If there wasn't anything open, they'd ring doorbells, bang on grain-elevator doors or stroll up to homeowners weeding gardens and working on cars. If that didn't work, they'd try a community recycling center or look for willing participants gassing up their cars or stopped at a railroad crossing. One time, a woman painting a building came down from scaffolding to sign. There was always a plan B.

McKeown believes that most of the people he talked with supported nuclear disarmament, but didn't think it was very likely. So, there were no shortage of discussions between naysayers and petitioners, with reluctant listeners sometimes capitulating and signing with a shrug of the shoulders. Other times there were heated discussions inside bars punctuated by snarky laughs or shaky voices from rattled customers. Nobody was ever threatening to us. Most people who disagreed

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Notes from the President . . .

All hands on deck

by Michael McDonald

Chapter 27 continues to fight the good fight on so many fronts.

We ended up handing out over 5,000 stickers this summer, mainly at Open Streets in Minneapolis. What a great opportunity it was to engage with so many about issues that concern us.

In October, several members were part of the anti-Trump rally downtown. We peacefully protested about many of his administration's positions.

On November 6th, the Save Our VA group met on the Crosstown bridge with signs protesting the continuing fight over privatization of the VA. This monthly protest includes

not only VFP members, but also unions that are with us.

Led by Steve McKeown, Craig Wood and WAMM, we reached the goal of signatures from all 851 cities in Minnesota on the anti-nuclear petitions.

Dave Logsdon and myself tabled at a Climate Concerns night at the Perpich School in Golden Valley.

On Armistice Day, Larry Johnson led a group of walkers 11 miles from downtown Minneapolis to the Capitol in St. Paul. Along with City of the Bells we rang our bells. Two ex-governors, Al Quie and Jesse Ventura, rang the Liberty Bell replica. We also had a presence at St. Catherine's event and at Brit's Pub where we again rang the bells.

I personally had the great pleasure of attending the SOA Watch at Ft. Benning. Meeting so many peacemakers, especially Roy Bourgeois, was inspiring.

We continue to speak our truths, and fight the good fight. I am grateful to be part of such an involved group of Chapter 27 Veterans For Peace.

Commentary in the Mpls. Tribune

Armistice Day, Veterans & Our Climate Emergency

This is a commentary published in the Tribune by Michael McDonald and Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer

Armistice Day was first celebrated on November 11, 1918 to mark the signing of an accord that led to the end of World War I. It honored the war dead—both soldiers and civilians, affirmed peace as a universal principle, and promoted world peace. It continues to be observed with bell ringing ceremonies on November 11th in many countries around the world.

In 1954, the U.S. Congress re-branded Armistice Day as Veterans Day. This name change in the U.S. context shifted attention from the senseless carnage of war and the importance of peace to a narrower focus on honoring soldiers and glorifying the military. A day that was intended to celebrate and promote an end to war became part of our nation's war-friendly culture. Although Veterans Day ceremonies undoubtedly include heart-felt recognition of the sacrifices all soldiers make, they often encourage shallow patriotism and cheap veneration of the troops. Neither is the friend of soldiers. They also reinforce ideas that U.S. military supremacy is the key to U.S. and global security, and that supporting the troops requires being silent when faced with wars fought in service to indefensible foreign policy goals.

This Veterans Day we are mindful that Armistice

Day's original goals to end war and promote peace are ecological imperatives in light of the climate emergency and other ecological crises that confront us. We are also aware that many U.S. military policies and practices aggravate these crises.

Our very existence is in peril in part because war threatens the environment. Intentional damage to the environment during times of war leaves a large ecological footprint. The use of herbicides and defoliants such as Agent Orange in Vietnam left both American soldiers and the Vietnamese people sickened for decades. Land mines and cluster bombs left behind in Indochina, Kosovo, Iraq and elsewhere continue to injure or kill. Tens of millions of these devices are still present on three continents. Additionally, radiation poisoning after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki killed many thousands of Japanese civilians long after World War II ended. Despite the fact that nuclear war would amount to ecocide, the U.S. is committed to upgrading its nuclear weapons arsenal over the next thirty years with an estimated price tag of \$1 trillion.

CO2 emissions that result from burning oil and other fossil fuels are a leading cause of climate change. If we

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just said no.

Some happily took the pen. Early one morning a woman from Bemidji who had been an anti-war activist in North Dakota came down the stairs from her motel room in her pajamas to thank and hug VFP members on the bus. She also was a musician at the NYC Riverside Church for William Sloane Coffin. "It's so good to see the peace movement is still alive," she said with watery eyes.

Reasons for signing or not signing varied, given the huge cross section of people involved. There were no shortage of Christian enthusiasts who were torn between a dedication to the principles of their faith and an allegiance to their country. Others seemed reluctant to sign if their neighbors or friends were watching or wanted to check out local signatures before signing. God forbid the neighbors should find out members of the household across the road don't like nuclear weapons.

Education that goes back-and-forth is usually the best, and is an important part of Chapter 27's community outreach program, especially with the bus. A surprising number

of people we talked with about our concerns, shared some of theirs with us. The issue of military benefits came up frequently and it became apparent that rural residents not only joined the armed services because of area job shortages, they kept re-enlisting to keep medical benefits for their families.

A bartender polishing glasses in a small town VFW talked openly in front of customers about her husband staying in the military for the affordable medical care. One concerned father stopped his riding lawnmower to talk for nearly 20 minutes about his only son in the military overseas who kept re-enlisting to make sure his three daughters would have health insurance. He was so sick of war that he signed.

The only objection to obtaining signatures came from a public employee in a small conservative town who took it upon himself to get off his riding lawnmower to tell petitioners they needed a local permit. McKeown didn't believe

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Petition update: Number of signers from towns and cities

The following are the Towns and cities with 20 or more signatures on the petition to ban nuclear weapons globally:

Ada-21, Albert Lea-60, Andover-33, Anoka-52, Apple Valley-110, Arlington-21, Austin-75, Belle Plaine-26, Bemidji-55, Big Lake-26, Blaine-78, Bloomington-527, Blue Earth-27, Brainard-106, Brooklyn Center-69, Brooklyn Park-137, Buffalo-36, Burnsville-125, Cambridge-54, Cannon Falls-20, Champlin-32, Chanhassen-45, Chaska-55, Columbia Heights-63, Coon Rapids-96, Cottage Grove-41, Crystal-60, Delano-24, Detroit Lakes-31, Duluth-391, Eagan-184, Eden Prairie-169, Edina-401, Elk River-28, Excelsior-49, Fairmount-29, Faribault-81, Farmington-43, Fergus Falls-37, Forest Lake-35, Fridley-95, Glencoe-21, Golden Valley-102, Grand Rapids-57, Ham Lake-20, Hastings-31, Henderson-20, Hopkins-174, Hugo-40, International Falls-21, Inver Grove Heights-63, Isanti-23, Jackson-26, Jordan-24, Kenyon-29, Lakeville-61, Lanesboro-22, Little Falls-52, Mahanomen-24, Maple Grove-106,

Maple Plain-21, Maplewood-103, Mankato-215, Marshall-67, Mendota Heights-28, Milaca-25, Minneapolis-7,994, Minnetonka-227, Montgomery-24, Monticello-33, Moorhead-33, Morris-31, Moundsview-24, Mound-22, New Brighton-74, New Hope-49, New Prague-26, New Ulm-107, Northfield-225, North Mankato-25, Oakdale-39, Owatonna-66, Pequot Lakes-25, Pine River-26, Pipestone-51, Plymouth-122, Princeton-44, Prior Lake-54, Ramsey-34, Red Wing-28, Richfield-658, Robbinsdale-70, Rochester-219, Rogers-32, Rosemount-48, Roseville-156, St. Cloud-137, St. Francis-22, St. Louis Park-348, St. Michael-30, St. Paul-2,183, St. Peter-68, Sandstone-35, Sauk Centre-24, Sauk Rapids-33, Savage-53, Shafer-24, Shakopee-80, Shoreview-71, Sleepy Eye-25, South St. Paul-40, Stillwater-87, Thief River Falls-36, Vadnais Heights-28, Waconia-39, West St. Paul-56, White Bear Lake-69, Winona-38, Willmar-52, Windom-26, Woodbury-107, Zimmerman-21, Zumbrota-21.

View from VFP National Perspective

by Dave Logsdon

*"I am a red arrow on the graph of revelation."
James Lowell*

What a year 2019 turned out to be! For the world, this has been a turbulent period of humankind's existence. As we enter 2020 as an organization, we are faced with a sea change on many fronts. VFP has joined the multitude of voices sounding the alarm about the realities of the environmental degradation of our planet. For our part we stressed the enormous negative impact on our environment caused by our bloated defense budget. We have trumpeted that message locally and nationally as well. The environment and the money wasted by our military while destroying it is a message we will be repeating more and more in the coming year. Our new National Executive Director, Garrett Reppenhagen, gave a powerful speech at Jane Fonda's Fire Drill Fridays action in D.C. Rinse and repeat, we have an environmental emergency and can not sit back and ignore it anymore!

*"Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, But a means by which we arrive at that goal."
Martin Luther King*

At the gates of Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia, I had the honor of representing Veterans For Peace in addressing the 500 folks who came there from all over the country. We had a bell ringing, and I addressed the crowd. The School of the Americas at Fort Benning is now called WHINSEC (Western Hemisphere Institute of Security), but the trail of blood still leads directly to its doorsteps. The leaders of the recent coup in Bolivia were trained at the school. The need to be at the gates with our strong voices is as important now as when VFP and other peace and justice groups from Minnesota first made the trek to Georgia in the early nineties! We need to return next year with bigger numbers and continue to bring the fight to the root of so much evil in this hemisphere.

*"Peace is not only better than war,
but infinitely more arduous."
George Bernard Shaw*

I've been told to "take a hike" many times in my life, and maybe that is not bad advice! As the Midwest's only representative on the VFP Board, I have been reaching out

to the chapters here. Tim Keenan, the Traverse City, Michigan chapter president, sent me a copy of his book "The Good Hike," and it was a good read! I finished it at one in the morning. I felt I had walked the 2,000-mile Appalachian Trail and his combat "hikes" in the jungles of Vietnam with him. He had presented a powerful film about returning to Vietnam to meet and talk to some of the soldiers from the NVA at a recent National VFP convention. Suffice it to say, this is tough stuff. I have invited Tim to speak about his book and present the film in January (10th & 11th) at Mayday Books and at our office, 4200 Cedar.

Taking walks has always been a powerful way to express a point of view. Going back to Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Mandela and others, walking can bring a level of attention as well as create a bond between marchers that lasts forever. The Monahan brothers walked across America to call attention to Move to Amend. Kyong Juhn's walk of Hope and Peace that we participated in last year was a galvanizing experience for the many participants. The indigent "Water Walkers" who every year do walks from various bodies of water to other bodies of water to honor the earth as water protectors. On Armistice Day this year Larry Johnson, former chapter president and avid walker, led a group of eight from downtown Minneapolis to the state capital grounds (11 miles) in 10 degree weather so we could ring our bells 11 times in remembrance of the Armistice.

*"Oh no I said too much, I haven't said enough."
R.E.M.*

There's not a lot of language from my Navy days that has stuck with me other than "shiver me timbers" and "thar she blows," as well as one that applies to the climate emergency and our military's adventures into all corners of the world: ALL HANDS ON DECK!!!!

As the late Jon Fromers sang, "It's gonna take us all to win the peace, it's gonna take us all."

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/

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he needed permission to petition his government about grievances, and another VFP member suggested to the citizen that he call a cop if he was so concerned. After fuming a bit, he went back to the lawnmower and McKeown and his friend headed to an auto parts/repair garage which was the only place open; they left town with five signatures.

WAMM member and long time activist Marie Braun is also on board with worldwide nuclear disarmament; nuclear weapons have been a concern for WAMM since it was formed in 1982. She's not only appalled by the potential effects of these weapons, her organization also believes they make the world less safe because of the fear and mistrust they create between countries.

Braun and her like-minded friends became more involved with a movement to eliminate nuclear weapons after reading in 2016 about the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). This organization was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 for bringing awareness to the horrific consequences of nuclear warheads, while pioneering a global plan to get rid of them. Not coincidentally, this is the same year the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was endorsed by 122 countries at the

United Nations (UN) in New York. The agreement seeks to prohibit nuclear weapons worldwide and becomes international law when it's signed and ratified by 50 countries. So far, 34 nations have provided signatures and ratified the treaty.

This was impetus enough for WAMM to spearhead the local campaign supporting the treaty. Soon they were asking US Senators and Representatives to weigh in on the proposed nuclear weapons ban.

"We began this Campaign to add our voices to those around the world calling for the passage of an international treaty to ban nuclear weapons. This will soon be a reality, but there is still much work to be done to rid the world of these horrendous weapons. We will continue to be a part of the struggle," said Marie Braun

By late October of this year, over 22,600 residents from all 851 incorporated Minnesota towns had signed this petition calling for the abolishment of nuclear weapons. McKeown (who has by far obtained the most signatures) thinks the number should be 25,000.

In the meantime, those who have an interest in banning nuclear weapons are encouraged to call members of Congress, especially their two Senators, and make statements in support of the UN treaty.

Call and leave a message: support the nuke ban

by Steve McKeown

After dialing Senator Amy Klobuchar's office (612-727-5220) or Senator Tina Smith's (651-221-1016), expect to hear someone ask if they can help you or direct your call. The message we want relayed to them is this: "I want the Senator to support the United Nations Campaign to Ban all Nuclear Weapons, and for the Senator to publicly announce their support for this ban." Normally they just take your request and say that they will pass it along to the Senator. We suggest that you also ask them to respond in writing to your request. One doesn't have to be a total expert on this Treaty, but rather just have the conviction that no one is good enough to have any of these weapons.

Now that Veterans for Peace and Women Against Military Madness have collected 22,793 signatures from all 851 incorporated towns and cities in Minnesota and 41 from towns that aren't incorporated, along with 557 signatures from residents of 44 other states, we are in the process of making appointments to see our elected officials to bring this large collection of signatures to them. That is where the supportive phone calls come in. We also ask that you contact your congressional representative with the same mes-

sage.

In our previous newsletter, I made the comparison of the peak number of world wide nuclear weapons of over 66,000 in 1986, which is about the seating capacity of the Minnesota Vikings Stadium, to the current number of just under 14,000, which is the capacity of the University of Minnesota Williams Arena where the Gophers play basketball. The 22,973 signatures we have collected surpass standing room only attendance at the Minneapolis Target Center where the Timberwolves play and where President Trump campaigned. Often one hears politicians claim to support those from Main Street. We have been to the Main Streets of Minnesota more than anyone running can ever claim, and had we had more clipboards with petition requesters. There could have easily been a million. Please amplify the work we have done by making those phone calls. Lest anyone think this verifiable UN Treaty is too idealistic, just remember who would have thought it was possible in 1986 that former Soviet Premiere Mikhail Gorbachev would have visited our state. This same person is calling for denuclearization, as we are. **Again, pick up the phone.**

Go the eleventh mile

by Larry Johnson

On November 11 some of us walked 11 miles from downtown Minneapolis to the Liberty Bell replica on the State Capitol Mall. Members of Veterans for Peace, plus former governors Al Quie and Jesse Ventura, rang the bell 11 times for the CITY OF BELLS ARMISTICE CEREMONY. Seven of us – Tom Bauch, Bruce Berry, Steve Gates, Larry Johnson, Barry Riesch, Gene Severson, and Craig Wood – walked the entire 11 miles, and others joined along the way. Cold made for a disjointed event at the Capitol, but our Armistice statement was read by President Mike McDonald, and heard by many who might not have been there if it were a regular VFP event.

When we ring the bells, we honor the sacrifice of veterans, stating that the greatest tribute we can pay is to work for peace to end the need for such sacrifice. On November 7 on KFAI's Northern Sun News, Steve Clemens, Don Olson, and I spoke to this from the perspective of the force of conscientious objection, a force opposing war, killing, and injustice. We briefly outlined 11 FORCES, one for each ringing of the bell, and my mind flipped back to when I first heard Paul Chappell say: "If a bunch of people could work long and hard to make slavery a prosecutable crime, we can do the same with war." I realized then how easy it is to fall into unconscious thinking, "Well, it's important to work for peace, but not much will change." The nonviolent forces below are not new, but I list them, believing we can work long, hard, and strategically to make change.

1. A media that honors the little known JFK quote, "War will end when the conscientious objector has the same status in the culture as the warrior." My C.O. definition surpasses the official one, including anyone who speaks out, like current political and sexual assault whistleblowers.

2. Absolute adherence to the oath soldiers must swear, to protect the Constitution and to refuse to obey unlawful orders. This includes the constitutional illegality of Presidents taking us into war, as well as using bombs or other weapons that kill civilians in violation of international law.

3. Churches cease spouting IT IS A JUST WAR, without awareness that JUST WAR DOCTRINE TENETS say a war is just if no civilians are harmed, or if you do not attack another country.

4. The United Nations as originally intended, with power to mobilize negotiation when conflict erupts, as well as enforcement of international law with all, not just African

dictators.

5. A firm policy that defense contractors show the same war sacrifice as soldiers and civilians, with zero profit for weapons perceived to be needed. Also, a common sense provision to prosecute the all too common "look the other way" crime of selling weapons to the "enemy."

6. Leverage the energy of young people protesting climate change, gun violence, racism, *etc.*, by helping them see how these outrages connect to our rampant, worldwide militarism.

7. Amplification of effective NGO organizations like Nonviolent PeaceForce.

8. Peace activists go after leaders who lie us into war, not the soldiers who become victims of those lies, through love of country or need for employment.

9. The will to emulate the conch, or skunk, and other animals that defend themselves without killing their predator, even as we once studied birds till we could fly ourselves.

10. Comprehensive, practical peace and nonviolence training, such as Captain Paul Chappell's peace literacy work. (www.peaceliteracy.org)

11. An end to perpetuation of inherent violence by healing veterans, their families, and the many civilians/refugees traumatized by war.

An hour on the radio is brief. Coming soon, a full day, in depth look at these forces, during TEN DAYS OF NON-VIOLENCE IN 2020. Watch for it, or weigh in to be involved. I am at larryjvfp@gmail.com; feel free to contact me.

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

The anti-recruiter

by Dick Foley, Vietnam, 1967-68

For about ten years I have been speaking at numerous high school classes as the “anti-recruiter,” stating, “If anyone is thinking of joining the military, I have total respect for that, but this is an important decision that involves critical thinking. If all you do is speak to a recruiter, then where is the critical thinking?” I then tell about my year in combat (1967-68) which resulted in being 70 percent disabled from PTSD, anxiety, and depression.

One of the things that I emphasize is that most combat veterans don’t like people to thank them for their service. I tell them to save that terminology for the Chamber of Commerce, cleaning up a playground, *etc.*; most combat veterans prefer “THANK YOU for your sacrifice!” I want it instilled that this requires more forethought and meaning. Students have said to me as they are leaving the classroom: “Thank you for your sacrifice, Mr. Foley.” That is truly a treasure for me to hear. The following are some of the written comments from I have received :

From teachers:

“Dick, I so appreciate your visit at Cretin Derham Hall to share your stories with us. It took lots of time and energy to speak from your heart and be honest! May you know that you are changing lives and deepening compassion for the sufferings and sacrifices of all veterans.”

From Students:

- “We hope to apply this to our daily lives. Especially when it comes to learning about social issues. Thank you for everything.”
- “It made me realize how much traumatizing experiences can affect the rest of your life. It also made me aware of the idea that everyone has a backstory that no one knows, so I should treat everyone with respect. His story was shocking and gave me a lot of insight on what being a veteran is like.”
- “When Mr. Foley said, ‘Don’t be afraid of things that happened to you.’ Saying that just because things happen doesn’t mean it’s the end of the world and that you cannot live any longer. It just means you have to work harder to overcome things, even if that means reaching out for help.”
- “Through a lot of his stories I learned how much impact war has on someone’s physical appearance and mental state. Another story he told that impacted me was the one about the worst day of his life. Just one of the two events he shared could truly affect someone for the

rest of their life and he had to deal with both in one day.”

Some of these comments also thanked me for my sacrifice. This year I spoke at St. Paul’s Highland Park High School for two days in October to two classes each day, and seven classes at Cretin-Derham Hall recently. I am scheduled to speak in December at Benilde-St Margaret on two different days. I am proud to say that I have always been invited back, and I truly welcome the opportunity to speak at new schools. I have also spoken at St. Paul’s Hill Murray, and Johnson, as well as at Minneapolis Southwest, Washburn, and Cristo Rey Jesuit High School.

After classes several students approached me to tell me they were thinking about joining the military, and applying to one of the academies, but after my talk they changed their minds.

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fairly assess U.S. foreign policies then we must acknowledge that our country’s desire to control oil producing nations often has been the leading factor in deciding when and where to wage war. The U.S. military’s appetite for oil is insatiable. It is the world’s biggest institutional user of oil and is itself a leading contributor to the climate crisis. It is also generally exempt from environmental regulations.

The U.S. military’s ecological footprint also includes dumping carcinogenic and radioactive chemicals into U.S. waterways. Over 400 U.S. military bases are known to have contaminated water which has sickened not only our troops and families, but surrounding communities. Also, maintaining 800 bases in over 80 countries comes at a heavy cost environmentally and to the American taxpayer.

Finally, even as the Trump administration guts environmental standards and blocks climate mitigation efforts, the U.S. military budget has soared. Approximately sixty percent of the federal discretionary budget is dedicated to spending for war and war preparation. Privileging military spending in the midst of an unprecedented climate crisis that is aggravated by military policies and priorities is the epitome of foolishness.

In 1991 the local chapter of Veterans for Peace brought back the peace tradition of Armistice Day, including bell ringing ceremonies that are carried out throughout the United States. This Armistice Day let us remember that peace is now an ecological imperative and the Native American wisdom tradition which says, “We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors. We borrow it from our children.”

Contemporary Issues in Counter-Terrorism

by Mike Madden

On November 4, 2019, the Minnesota Human Rights Center and the Minnesota Journal of International Law held a symposium titled Contemporary Issues in Counter-Terrorism at the University of Minnesota Law School.

The symposium addressed a host of issues: deradicalization, countering violent extremism (CVE) programs, civil liberties and the right to privacy, gender issues concerning foreign terrorist fighters and returnees, and transnational issues.

Issues related to terrorism are rarely treated with nuance. Terrorist fighters, their sympathizers, and all those associated with them are often portrayed simply as evil, and therefore undeserving of traditional protections. This symposium addressed the erosion of human and civil rights, not only for those painted with the broad brush of terrorism, but for the general public as well. It also examined current efforts by lawyers, academics, and civil society to restore basic rights for humanitarian reasons, and as a necessary condition for a just and secure world.

The problematic nature of CVE programs is known well to Muslim communities in the Twin Cities. In October of 2018, FBI agent Terry Albury was sentenced to 48 months in prison after being found guilty under the Espionage Act for leaking classified information to the press. The documents he leaked exposed a CVE program that utilized unconstitutional surveillance based upon race and religion to target the Somali community in Minneapolis. The program “demeaned, demonized, harassed, and intimidated the very people he was sworn to protect and serve,” according to Albury’s fundraising website.

Although the symposium did not include any speakers affected by the local CVE program, Diala Shamas, staff attorney for the Center for Constitutional Rights, shared her experience with the CVE program in New York. There, the primary targets were Muslims. She gave examples of activities that have resulted in increased government scrutiny: a Muslim student group that hosts the “wrong” cleric, social media criticism of drone strikes, and in one instance, a person became a target because they stopped their postings.

The success of CVE programs tends to be measured by the number of informants recruited and arrests made, without regard for individual and community harm. Shamas said such harm takes the form of suppression of dissenting opinions, reduced activism, and a general climate of fear and suspicion. In 2017, she was part of the legal team in *Raza v. City of New York* that won a settlement reforming discrim-

inatory NYPD surveillance practices.

Warrantless surveillance is not limited to the United States. Ben Hayes, an independent researcher who has worked with the civil liberties organization Statewatch, added that people in the UK have been targeted for wearing pro-Palestinian badges and Extinction Rebellion regalia.

The keynote address was delivered by Fionnuala Ni Aolain, a University Regents Professor and UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism.

Ni Aolain said that the detainee camps in Syria and Iraq are inadequate, and people in them are still subject to Islamic State influence. The distinction between victim and perpetrator is not always clear, nor can it always be determined whether involvement in terrorist activity is voluntary or not. Women and children are often not treated as individuals, but rather categorized by their relationship to terrorist fighters. **In one Belgian case, giving birth was treated as providing material support to the Islamic State.**

Ni Aolain advocates the return of foreign terrorist fighters to their country of origin. It is the just solution she said, and it is in the world’s long term security interest.

Tufyal Choudhury, an Associate Professor at Durham University and advisor at Rights Watch UK, expanded on the importance of states taking responsibility for their own nationals who have become foreign terrorist fighters. States are increasingly turning to citizenship deprivation to punish and prevent return of their nationals. In the UK, there have been 150 citizenship deprivations since 2010. Prior to that, there had only been six.

The proper balance between security and protecting human and civil rights can be as fundamentally disputed as the definition of terrorism itself. Traditionally seen as composed of three necessary elements - an act of deliberate violence, perpetrated against innocent civilians, for the purpose of advancing a political or ideological agenda - some would expand the victim component to include government and military personnel. Professor Ni Aolain noted there is now a “gentleman’s agreement” in international circles that terrorism is whatever the person speaking claims it to be.

The United States of America has trained terrorists at the School of the Americas. It has allied itself with terrorist organizations in Iran (the MEK) and Syria (Al-Nusra Front). Its response to foreign acts of terror on its own soil has been the vengeful commission of violence abroad and the curtailment of civil liberties at home. With American military bases in 80 foreign countries, a malleable definition of terrorism would be a dangerous prospect for the world.

Eleven rings?

by Ron Staff

It's not a long way from one to eleven.

On Armistice Day Larry Johnson, a past president of Veterans For Peace, Ch. 27, announced an 11-mile walk for Armistice Day in memory of servicemen. They walked from the Post Office in Minneapolis to the replica of the Liberty Bell at the south end of the Capitol grounds. On this day in 2019 the air temperature was 14 degrees, not quite eleven. Larry said a group of eight others walked with him the whole 11 miles.

Along the way others fell in step. Mike McDonald, the current President of Ch. 27, reported there were two dozen by the time they got to the grounds. Former Governors Al Quie and Jessie Ventura arrived just before 11 and came to the bell to put an official twist on the event. At precisely 11 a.m., former Governor Quie pulled the rope on the clapper 11 times. Some of the pulls didn't ring very true. Former Governor Ventura then pulled 11 times, also. More of his rang true. (We're now up to about 22.). The next former serviceman rang it 11 times. (33). As another participant added his share this reporter left somewhere in the 40 or 50 ring range.

Prior planning might have been able to line up 11 different individuals getting a single pull. But one understands from this that a committee can get wires crossed and lose the 11-bell focus.

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

**Smedley Butler
Four-Star USMC General**

Pentagon scouring social media for signs of protests

by Frank Fuller

In one of Project Censored's top 25 censored stories of 2019, The Pentagon has been funding research into using social media posts, particularly Twitter feeds, to predict social unrest and protests.

According to a report in vice.com, "**The social media posts of American citizens who don't like President Donald Trump are the focus of the latest US military-funded research.** The research, funded by the US Army and co-authored by a researcher based at the West Point Military Academy, is part of a wider effort by the Trump administration to consolidate the US military's role and influence on domestic intelligence."

Project Censored has featured the top censored stories of the year since 1972 and in recent years has seen an increasing number of important stories like this being ignored or censored because of the corporatization and centralization of media.

Much of the funding for the Pentagon's research comes from DOD's Minerva Project. According to The Guardian newspaper, "the DoD 'Minerva Research Initiative' partners with universities 'to improve DoD's basic understanding of the social, cultural, behavioral, and political forces that shape regions of the world of strategic importance to the US.'"

In fact, the Army funded a study to determine if the protests after Trump's inauguration could have been predicted. It concluded "that protests after the US elections could have been predicted by analyzing the Twitter posts of millions of American citizens in the lead-up to the demonstrations."

It used a tool called The Apollo Social Sensing Tool that was developed during the Obama Administration which

Minerva Project, Continued on page 10

Everybody in and nobody out

by Linda Hartmann,
West Metro Chapter, Healthcareforallmn.org

With the election season heating up, there are many conversations that are taking stage...at the center is healthcare for all. One such initiative is our very own Senator John Marty's bill S1384. Healthcare for All Minnesota is fighting the constant battle of myths as to what his bill is all about. The opposition is spending millions of dollars to create fear of change. **FIRST LET ME EMPHASIZE, THE VA HEALTHCARE SYSTEM WOULD REMAIN THE SAME...HIS BILL WILL KEEP THE VA SYSTEM FROM PRIVATIZATION, ALONG WITH THE NATIVE AMERICAN HEALTHCARE PROGRAM.**

The current system still leaves out a large number of veterans or family members. So, healthcare as a right, is something we should all be talking about. A veteran died from cancer due to Agent Orange. **This veteran had a son with a birth defect directly related to Agent Orange. This baby would eventually have 30 surgeries.** Per the late Senator Paul Wellstone, it was the third most common birth defect out of the DMZ/Vietnam war conflict. And yet when this child, a young man now, turned 18, he was uninsurable. **HE HAD NO INSURANCE UNTIL THE ACA (Affordable Care Act),** going decades with no coverage, because of a pre-existing condition. This would never happen with the Minnesota Health Plan (MHP).

Our current healthcare system leaves about 20 million people uninsured. The number of under-insured is staggering. Sixty-five percent of bankruptcies are medical, and many were insured! Keep in mind with Marty's plan, no deductibles, no out of pockets, no tiers, no co-pays. It will be based on ability to pay. The list of denials grows every year of the non-covered medical expenses.

Meanwhile, healthcare insurers CEO's take home millions of dollars each year. Just one CEO alone, at United Healthcare, took home \$19.8 million. Cigna CEO took home \$43.9 million (2017 figures). Insurance companies would be completely out of the picture with Marty's plan.

The care would be back in the hands of your doctor, who has for decades now been squeezed out, because of prior authorizations and the mountain of paperwork they currently demand from doctors, nurses, therapists, and the like. The bill would help to eliminate the current waste of 30 percent due to administrative costs. The fear of big government that opponents are using is nonsense. The VA system works for those in it. It also negotiates drug prices, something our current health insurance industry system and

the pharmaceutical giants won't allow us to do. They will, under Marty's plan, be forced to negotiate drug prices, like the VA.

Also, Medicare actually worked until the insurance companies took over.

Social Security is another great example of government working. As we know, the number of suicides of our veterans is high. Mental health is also included in this bill. We have a suicide crisis in America. Many veterans, many school age children, and domestic abuse victims should never be turned away before it is too late, because they lack mental health care. Personal stories of veterans, family members, spouses, children are many. Remember, they spend trillions of our tax payer dollars for war. We have the money in the United States of America...we just have the wrong priorities. Our current system is a profit driven system and it's time for it to sunset. It no longer serves the purpose for which it was intended.

Go to mnhealthplan.org to read Senator John Marty's plan. You can also visit www.healthcareforallmn.org for more information on this topic, from getting involved to seeing the library of video's on this topic

Minerva Project, from page 9

collect and analyse millions of social media posts.

The paper states unequivocally "the social network can be a predictor of mobilization, which in turn is a predictor of the protest."

Using social media makes counter intelligence operations a little easier than they were 40 or 50 years ago but the results are the same: peaceful protesters are labeled as terrorists.

Training and planning include war games set in the United States. One war game reportedly was based near Missoula, Montana, where environmental activists including members of the Sierra Club were protesting a coal fired plant. The point of these exercises is to determine which members of the population to target to move public opinion in line with the military's preference.

Over five years, the Minerva Project received over \$75 million for social and behavioral science research. This year it has been allocated a total budget of \$17.8 million by Congress.

For more information on this and other of the top censored stories, go to projectcensored.org.

Save Our VA Campaign Update

Broadening outreach to unions and healthcare activists!

by David Cooley, Arlys Herem and Jeff Roy
Co-Chairs of the SOVA Action Committee

Our Chapter has been working to Save Our VA ever since David Cooley took this on as a project years ago. We have evolved into the Save Our VA Action Committee with at least a dozen VFP activists and several representatives from other organizations (AMVETS, Healthcare For All – Minnesota, Physicians for a National Health Program, etc.) holding monthly informational picketing actions on the Hwy. 62/Crosstown bridge near the Minneapolis VA.

Our task is to raise public awareness and encourage people to advocate with their elected representatives about the continuing threat posed by the Trump Administration, Republican Congressional leaders and corporate interests to dismantle, defund and privatize the Veterans Health Administration system within the VA.

The privatization process was accelerated by the 2018 MISSION Act regulations that continue to divert more veterans away from the VA's superior veterans' healthcare system and into private-sector hospitals and clinics, where medical staff often lack the experience to treat veterans' healthcare issues like PTSD, military sexual trauma, toxic exposure, mental illness and suicide.

The monthly VA bridge actions also show public support for besieged VA workers who are in national contract negotiations with Trump-appointed, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie, who has been negotiating in bad faith. The VA workers locally are represented by two unions: American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) local 1969 and Professional Local 3669.

In October, Chapter 27 member Andy Berman recorded activists "in their own words," stating why they would be crazy enough to turn out on the bridge at 7 a.m. You can

view the video at: <https://youtube/rs8De4HOf1Y>

We need you to contact your congressional representatives! There are several bills related to veterans and the VA before Congress. We ask you to call and ask your Representative and Senators to support the following resolution and bill. You can use the following number at the Washington D.C. Congressional switchboard: 1-202-224-3121. Let them know you are a veteran or veteran supporter. Phone calls do help; when representatives receive at least 10 calls on a topic, they know there is interest out there!

Last month, the House introduced H.R. 701 to support a well-funded VA Health Administration, to condemn efforts to weaken VA healthcare through privatization efforts and to express support for VA workers, including the right to unionize. Please call and tell your Representative you want them to co-sign House Resolution 701 to support optimal health care for veterans through the VA Health Administration. Also, please ask your Senators to co-sponsor a companion resolution in the Senate.

Senate Bill S.2372 will repeal the AIR Commission created under the MISSION Act. The AIR Commission would review VA facilities, develop a list of facilities to close and require the entire list be approved or disapproved. This could threaten the health of rural veterans because some rural VA hospitals and clinics across the nation could be closed prior to a full understanding of how private-sector facilities under the Veterans Community Care Program impact the quality of veterans healthcare. It is critical that you encourage Senators Klobuchar and Smith to co-sponsor S.2372 and also encourage your Representative in the U.S. House to help bring forward a companion bill to S. 2372.

Progress is being made in broadening the circle of resistance. For more information or to participate, contact us at sovaminn@gmail.com if you want to be on the notification list for future actions.

Larry Johnson honored at 2019 Veterans Voices Awards

by Joan Johnson

VFP Chap. 27 member Larry Johnson was honored at the 2019 Veteran's Voices Award Ceremony on Oct. 5, 2019 at the beautiful St. Paul Union Depot. This event was sponsored by the Minnesota Humanities Center, which partnered with Warrior Writers workshops. Participants had been taught how to craft their individual stories through prose and poetry, while finding support and forming community with other veterans. If you've had the privilege of hearing Larry talk, you know that he is a natural at storytelling, having taught it for 20 years in Minneapolis public schools. So, my husband Steve and I were not surprised to learn that he was among the nine award winners that night, and we were thrilled to be able to attend this ceremony. At the entrance, we were handed a 40-page "2019 Veteran's Voices Award" booklet, which contained each speaker's writing/speech. I'd like to share excerpts from Larry's talk and those of two other presenters.

Larry began by describing his strict religious Christian upbringing and how dancing, drinking and swearing were

verboden, yet going to war was promoted — "to defend our Christian freedoms from godless heathens who would try to take those from us."

Prior to being drafted during the Vietnam War, he attended a "peace church," whose theology was similar to that of his upbringing, but Mennonites teach that killing is wrong, basing this belief on Jesus' teachings of nonviolence. This resonated with Larry and influenced his decision to be drafted "with a conscientious objection provision of serving as a medic with no weapon." His time in the U.S. military (and his extensive research before and after) revealed to him things he hadn't known about war and the U.S. soldier experience, many of which he shared with us that evening. For example, he convincingly challenged the "Just War" theory, one of its main tenets being "it's a just war if no civilians are harmed." With today's frequent bombings, drone attacks and new weapon systems, "Ninety percent of those killed or injured in warfare are civilians."

He reminded us that our nation's last several wars, including Vietnam, were illegal, according to U.S. law, because they had not been declared by Congress, as man-

Secret Place

by Jessica Kieran

*My dearest Anna
I've never told you,
my love,
about the time I almost died.
There was sand.
And it swirled
everywhere like tiny, crystalline
locusts. A world
of tan glitter shaving my skin and eyes.
This sand didn't know how to love like
the beach sand that hugged and caressed
your gorgeous feet buried
in warm and soft coconut-scented
granules.
No—
This sand, it whipped
And slashed and
scratched
and burned.
It ground it's way into every hidden spot
and crevice,
leaving nothing secret.
And, my love, there was a mountain.
The unforgiving and uncaring mountain
loomed*

*like the shadows of the
nightmares we had the previous night.
The nightmares that I now have
every night. Terror
that chases me even when I'm in bed with
you. Your
soft skin and quiet
breaths tickling my skin.
I always take in your addicting scent --let it
buoy my insides.
But still,
the nightmares come. Of that night, as...*

*We stumbled and crawled to the
peak, our crimson faces and glazed-out
eyes seeing
nothing. Bloated
silence overwritten as our
heaving gasps throbbed
in the open air.
We leaned and hunched
over our desperation,
weapons clinking like teeth against teeth,
and we*

*dreaming of anywhere but there.
Heaving, throbbing, burning,
heads brimming with pressure
And then
the air shattered--
projectile lead sliced, gouged, lodged into
yielding flesh, creating
depressions,
valleys, ridges, and other lines
on our bodies.
Our living corpses merely products the
Army made. Not perfect
machines but defective, bleeding bodies.
our exposed
muscles, sinews, and bones. Our unveiled
humanity.
Our wounds mapping the paths of our
lives,
our realities...
But not our wishes, dreams, or regrets.
Our hopes
unseen in the lines of our bodies.*

dated in the Constitution, which soldiers must swear to protect. Larry shared yet another disturbing, but well-known fact, that even though the "Uniform Code of Military Justice" states that "Soldiers are obligated to obey 'lawful' orders, and to refuse and report those that are unlawful," he saw that "too often soldiers are in deep trouble when they refuse and report." He talked about soldiers who report abuse and rape, "yet they've taken much abuse for bucking a system that should never have been tolerated." This is true for both women and men.

Another award recipient, Army veteran Laura Ludwig, a Plymouth, MN resident, echoed this sentiment. She cited the sobering statistic that "at least 32 percent of U.S. military women have reported being sexually assaulted, and up to 80 percent have been sexually harassed." Sadly, at age 18, Laura became one of those statistics. Having completed her MOS training as a surgical technician, she was looking forward to being a part of the first class of women accepted to West Point Military Academy. An attempted sexual assault on her completely derailed these plans, and for the past 43 years, she says she has experienced the fallout from that attack.

Reflecting back on her harrowing experience, she said,

"My sense of personal security was shattered. I felt violated, but nothing compared to the dismissive attitude and shaming I endured trying to file a report. Instead of being treated like a victim, I was figuratively 'raped' and stripped of any personal dignity by the very system I thought would protect me."

Her story of betrayal and re-victimization by her superiors is all too common. She lists highly publicized scandals like Tailhook (1991), Aberdeen (1996), and US Air Force Academy (2003), which she says "highlight the deep-seated culture of tolerance of inappropriate behavior that exists in the U.S. military," and sadly reminded us that, "Reported cases are just the tip of a very big iceberg." At the end of her talk, she stated that, until all victims are able to "come forward and report incidents without fear of shame or retaliation, the problem will continue to exist."

Below, we are printing the poem "Secret Place" by Jessica Kieran, of Moundsview, MN, who was in the Army (2007-2015). It is a letter to her daughter. There wasn't a dry eye in the room when she finished reading it.

*Our world ended and crumbled,
then renewed. Only to be
destroyed again.
And again.
Yet the earth still
rotated
once and twice.
Thrice.
Until finally, air whipped and
wind thrashed.
Ammo cans flew through the air
denting a head or two.
But there they were--blades whined and
metallic heat
thrummed in our hearts. Whispers of
romance
in the ear and
perfume to savor, hot breath
against our necks.
Medevacs to the rescue.
But still. I'm sorry, Honey.
Guilt throbbed like a
spiked stone thumping
into the depths of my heart because as I felt
the whisper of death blowing
against my ear,*

*my neck, raising the hairs on my arms.
I thought of you.
And I knew just how helpless
we all are. In this world, all we can do
is watch and struggle and let our hearts
do the work.
And at that time
my heart lub-dubbed, pushing hard
against my chest like
an overworked ox pulling
the hopes and dreams of the people
who needed saving.
For the future, my heart throbbed,
contracted, expanded,
worked double-time against
the weight of my shoulders.
Because death laughed in my ear,
its words echoed and bashed
against my eardrums. It told me
how close--mere inches
I'd been to biting that mountaintop.
"Soon," it said. "maybe
now. Maybe not. But for sure," it said.
"I'm coming for you.
I'm sorry, my love. I couldn't help*

*it. Because
as the earth rotated and the bullets forced
new contours into my body, and the sand
grated the youth
from my skin...the words of death...
they slipped inside,
burrowed their way,
burning
into my new*

(secret place).

*And I'm sorry, sweetie. But
maybe now. Maybe not. Ever. Or maybe
tomorrow.
But perhaps one day.
One day, I could give this letter to you.
Confess that it. Death.
Is coming for you, too.
And since I
couldn't save myself
or my band of brothers and sisters.
How in the hell/could I.*

Ever.

Save you?

Climate Change and U.S. Militarism

by Barry Riesch

On Saturday, September 28th, Veterans For Peace joined hundreds from across the Midwest on the shores of Gichigami (Lake Superior) to support the Ojibwe and stand up against the proposed Enbridge Line 3 tar sands pipeline.

Enbridge's Line 3 project would pump tar sands, which is the world's dirtiest oil, from Canada to Superior Wisconsin, crossing Ojibwe treaty land, wild rice lakes, and the headwaters of the Mississippi River. Claims are it would have the climate change impact of 50 coal power plants.

Last June, the Minnesota Court of Appeals threw out Line 3's environmental review because the spill risks to Lake Superior were never even studied. Meanwhile, Enbridge is doing pre-construction for the pipeline, even with lawsuits, expert recommendations, tribal nations, community groups, and presidential candidates lining up against the project.

Veterans For Peace joins in these actions to draw the connection between U.S. Militarism and climate change. We know that if we want to stop climate change, we need to stop US militarism. Veterans For Peace knows that peace and climate change movements are one and the same.

The US military is responsible for the most egregious and widespread pollution of the planet, yet this information and accompanying documentation goes almost entirely unreported.

Two major studies published in June remain buried by most major media outlets. The first study, "Pentagon Fuel Use, Climate Change and the Costs of War," by Neta Crawford for Brown University's Costs of War Project, confirmed previous findings that the US military is "the single largest producer of greenhouse gases in the world," and that the Pentagon is responsible for between "77 and 80 percent of all US government energy consumption" since 2001.



From the beginning of the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 to 2017, the US military emitted approximately 1.2 billion metric tons of CO2 equivalent.

The second study, "Hidden Carbon Costs of the 'Everywhere War': Logistics, Geopolitical Ecology, and the Carbon Footprint of the US Military," found that if the US military were a country, its "fuel usage alone would make it the 47th largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the

world, sitting between Peru and Portugal."

Yet these groundbreaking studies received no coverage in the biggest newspapers and TV news channels in the country. An initial search in the Nexis news database from June 1 to October 4 of the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, NPR, PBS, ABC, MSNBC, CBS and CNN turned up nothing.

Any discussion of the Pentagon's relation to climate change is also noticeably absent from our recent Presidential candidate debates.

Our economy's dependence on fossil fuels has become the number one reason for our military interventions. It's a self-perpetuating cycle: To invade for oil, the military consumes oil in the process. In light of coup attempts in Venezuela as well as continuing war threats against oil rich Iran, now is a pivotal time for the peace movement and the climate movement to come together.

Not only has U.S. intervention in Latin America caused the current migrant crisis, it has also ruined the ecologies of Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Columbia and El Salvador, creating climate refugees in addition to political asylum-seekers. People of the global south have long fought against the environmental devastation of imperial invasions, coups and sanctions..

We can't ignore this. To stop oil dependency-to stop climate change itself, we need to end US Imperialism.

World beyond war conference

by Paula Staff

My husband, Ron, and I attended this conference along with an estimated 100 people at the South Court Hotel in Limerick. The conference, Pathways to Peace, had a full schedule of presentations that ranged from Non-violence: The Foundation of Peace to Plans for Shannon and Ireland Today and in the Days to Come.

One of the most discussed concerns was the fact that Ireland is militarily neutral and yet lets US military planes along with their personnel and munitions fly in and out of Shannon airport. A recent poll noted that 82 percent supported Irish neutrality. On Oct. 6, a bus took conference participants to the Shannon airport where we had an hour-long protest about violating military neutrality. It is my understanding that there are weekly protests at the Shannon airport on Sunday afternoons for one hour.

The increasing militarism in Europe and NATO was highlighted as well. Rather, than making the connection between the build up of military and rise of the climate crisis, a blind eye is cast in that direction. It's as if a curtain covers up the truth of the actions of the military and governments. We are encouraged to rend the curtain and let the truth shine through. As Mairead Maguire said, "...delegate these barbaric ways to the dustbin of history."

Suggestions about actions we must take are many. First, divest our investments in war and climate destruction



Nobel laureate Mairead Maguire (left) and Paula Staff.

sources; so we can be assured that our money supports our values. Join associations that support demilitarization, climate health, and peace to offer support and encouragement to us. Practice non-violence. Listen closely and deeply to each other. Show up for collective, peaceful actions.

I was thankful that we were fortunate to travel to Limerick and be surrounded by people dedicated to creating a more peaceful and healthy world. The people were from around the world, so I doubt I'll meet them again. Yet, we had those few hours of collective work. The work is urgent and honorable.

EVENTS CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS

4-5 pm Weds. Lake Street/Marshal Ave. Peace Bridge vigil.

Monthly VFP chapter meeting, 2nd Sun., 6 pm, 4200 Cedar Av. S.

7:30 am every Tues. Vigil in front of Federal Whipple Bldg south of Hwy 55 and 62 with the Interfaith Coalition on Immigration.

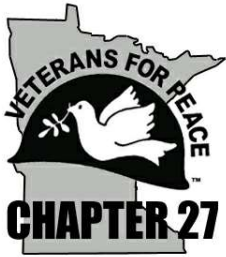
4:45 pm Weds., 50th and Halifax, Mpls. Grandmothers for Peace Vigil. (FFI call 612-927-7607)

8 am, 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month. People of Faith Peacemakers Breakfast, at African Development Ctr., 1931 S. 5th St., Mpls. (FFI 612-333-4772)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan. 10, 7 pm, Tim Keenan will read from his book *The Good Hike* about walking 2,300 miles on the Appalachian Trail and how it relates to burying demons from his Vietnam combat experience. Mayday Books 301 Cedar Ave., Minneapolis. Also on **Jan. 11, 7 pm** at VFP office, 4200 Cedar Av. S., Mpls.

Aug 5-9, 2020, VFP National Convention, Albuquerque, NM. (more info in next issue).



Veterans For Peace Chapter 27
4200 Cedar Av. S., Suite 7
Minneapolis, MN 55407

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Winter 2019-20 Newsletter

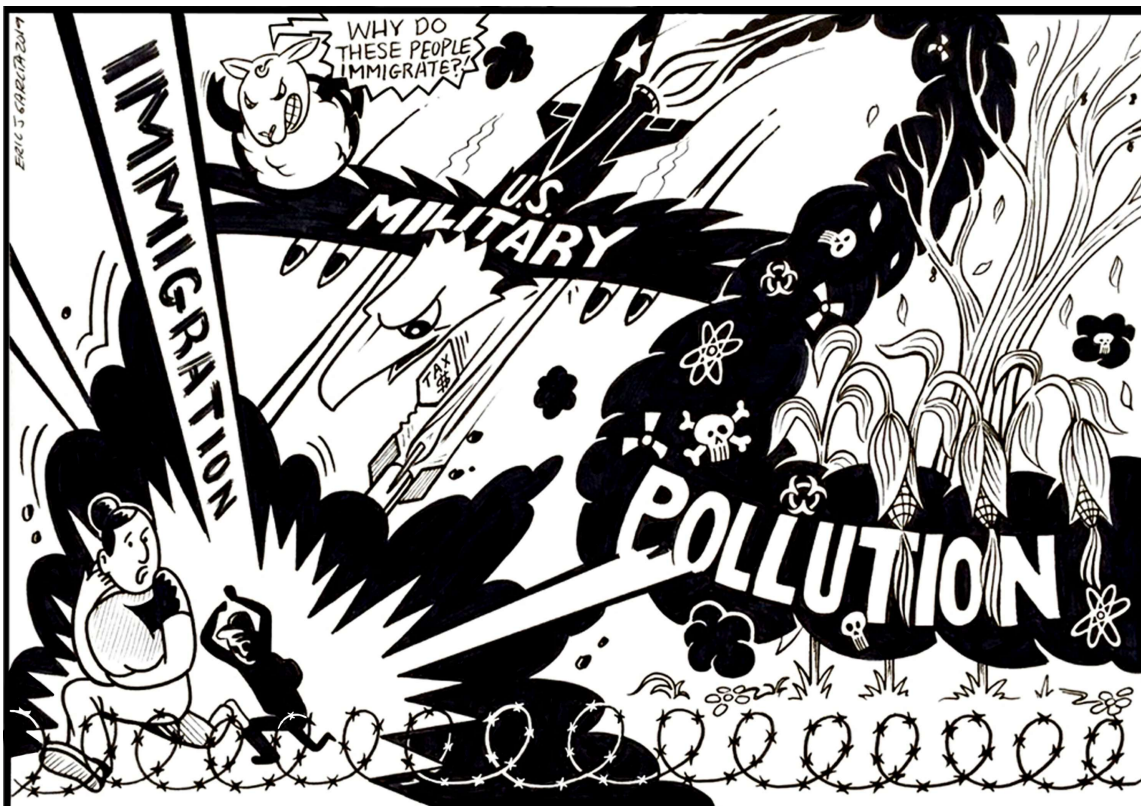
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SUPPORT THE TROOPS! BRING THEM HOME ALIVE NOW!

As of Dec. 5, 2019:

At least 7,015 dead in Iraq and Afghanistan;
over one million injured veterans.

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



Eric J. Garcia's cartoons will be a regular feature in our newsletter. He started creating political cartoons while in the U.S. Air Force to poke fun at the officers, but this later evolved into satirizing his job and the military itself. Garcia's weekly series, "El Machete Illustrated" is a black and white, one panel-critique that shreds conservatives and exposes hypocrisy, wherever it lurks.