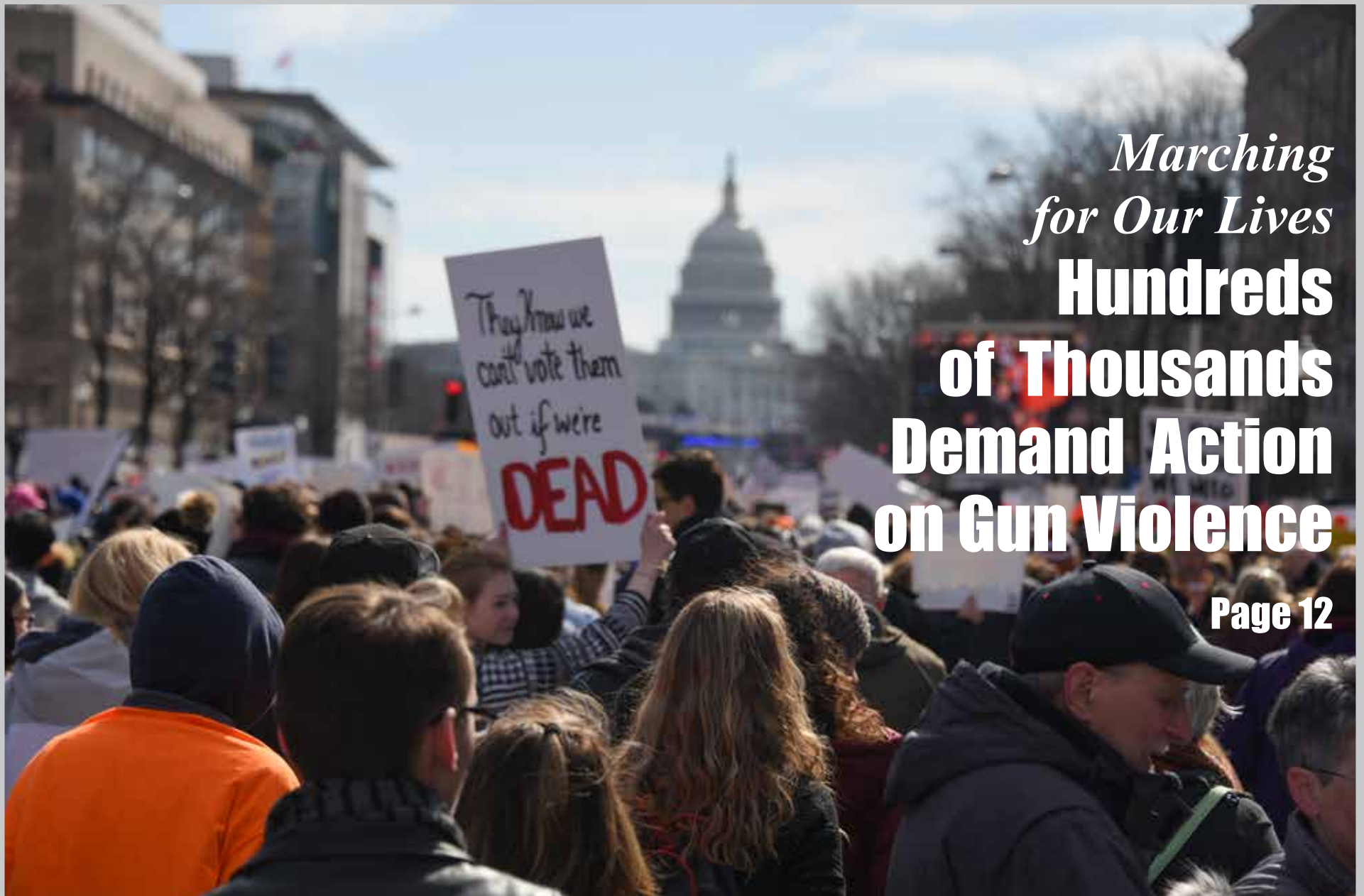


Peace in Our Times



A Veterans For Peace publication exposing the root causes and enormous costs of war



*Marching
for Our Lives*
**Hundreds
of Thousands
Demand Action
on Gun Violence**

Page 12

Israel Destroys Homes and History of Palestine's Indigenous Bedouin



*Bedouin women sit outside a home demolished by Israeli forces in the southern village of Umm al-Hiran, Jan. 18, 2017.
Photo: AP/Tsafir Abayov*

By Miko Peled

BIR-AS-SABA', NAQAB—The Naqab region is assumed to be an integral part of the apartheid state of Israel. However, like all other parts of historic Palestine, it was taken by force and has been occupied since 1948, when the Zionist state was established.

For the last seven decades, its indigenous people, the Palestinian Bedouin, who have lived here for thousands of years, have been living without rights and subjected to a vicious campaign of dispossession and racial segregation.

Naming Rights

When looking at information about the Naqab Desert, the first thing one notices is that most sources refer to it by the Israeli-given Hebrew name, the "Negev." Similarly, the West Bank is now Judea and Samaria; Marj Ibn Amer is Emek Izra'el; and countless other Palestinian localities that have been taken are renamed. This is part of the Zionist policy of imposing Jewish identity on the Palestinian landscape.

A map will show that the Naqab makes
continued on page 18 ...

Letters to the Editor

Camp Humphreys

I was pleased to see the Letman article about Camp/Garrison Humphreys in the last edition of *Peace in Our Times*.

I was stationed at Camp Humphreys when I was assigned to South Korea in 1980 as an Army Sergeant.

It was big enough then. Now it's f'ing enormous, and stole a huge swath of Korea's scarce farmland to further entrench U.S. forces there, and make the former hardship one-year Korea tour longer and bring in families, to enlarge the Asia pivot and US hegemony there.

I was aware of the struggle to save the farmers' land, and supported it with petition signatures and some money. I'm so sad it failed. The Gwang Ju massacre that happened in 1980 while I was in Korea was a horror I am ashamed of having loaned my body to support, and Garrison Humphreys is on my conscience too. *Damn!*

Ellen Barfield

VFP Chapter 105, Baltimore

Dear Mr. President

I never was one for parades, but I suffer through them for the children.

I see you wish to put on a military parade like Bastille Day festivities you witnessed in Paris this last July.

Bastille Day was not just about the military parade, but about French culture, a celebration of a revolution against authoritarianism.

The Bastille was a medieval fortress and prison in Paris. Many people in France associated it with the harsh rule of the Bourbon monarchy in the late 1700s. On July 14, 1789, troops stormed the Bastille. This was a pivotal event at the beginning of the French Revolution.

Such a parade in the USA would need to march around the White House and storm it, if it were to have any relevance for today.

It would be to rid ourselves of you and your ridiculous ideas.

To liberate ourselves from the top-down iron boot on the necks of the working class, women, the poor, immigrants, refugees, and people of color.

Or do you wish to order a military parade that must salute you in mass formations, goose stepping as they pass in front of you, to give the appearance they wuv you?

I am sure you want to put our military might on display, but isn't that what cowards and bullies do?

Will you have veterans march carry-

ing crosses of our war dead, veterans in hospital beds, in wheelchairs, with shiny, new, and highly sophisticated prosthetic limbs leading the parade?

Will your marchers have a float with 20 to 22 caskets on display to represent the daily veteran suicides?

Will you parade the weeping mothers who have lost their sons and daughters, or have the children dressed in camouflage hiding their tears for a parent that will never return?

No! Mr. President, military parades are for dictators, tyrants, and fools.

Thus, I half expect to see one, but hope you think better, not to proceed.

Sincerely yours,

Someone who wishes to see you resign from office.

Peace at Home, Peace Abroad

Dan Shea

VFP Board Member

Miracle at the VA

Today, at the Veterans Administration Clinic in Austin, Texas, Gene Hicks, a 90-year-old WWII veteran, wept in my arms, then asked me, "Do you know that you are a brilliant man?"

My newest peace veteran brother, Gene, had seen my Marine Corps hat and immediately launched into a statement of how crazy the North Korean leadership is and how they pose a tremendous risk to every person on the planet.

I responded (in Southern dialect) with the facts, which included a history of the Koreans (mostly from the North) who had formed the most effective resistance against the Japanese Army in the mountains of Manchuria, suffering 95 percent casualties, only to return to their homes to face a brutal and evil U.S. occupation (1945–1954). I described how those American Occupiers (influenced by the Dulles Brothers and composed largely of CIA operatives) had sought to re-establish the very same Japanese henchmen who had occupied Korea from 1905 to 1945, enforcing one of the most brutal forms of slavery in human history (which I described in brutal detail, watching as his face showed me that he was listening with his heart's ears). I then described how, from 1945 to 1954, the U.S. government had supervised the slaughter of entire Korean communities in what we now know as "South Korea" (tens of thousands of people at a time) and had forced all Koreans with any interest in establishing a

continued on page 10 ...

A Note from the Editors



Veterans For Peace at the March for Our Lives in Washington D.C., March 24.

Photo: Ellen Davidson

On Banning Assault Weapons

Whenever I get depressed about how rapacious yet deeply imbedded capitalism is in our lives, I turn to the worldview of John Maynard Keynes, who believed that economics should be a "moral science." He told us that we can make this system work for the benefit of the entire community, for everyone. And one of the greatest drivers of that system can be democratic government that regulates and invests in citizen-oriented activities. A deficit is not a bad thing if it is used by this government to build infrastructure, to create jobs, to make people proud of their lives, to help out the weakest among us as they struggle. If it is used to protect the environment and to delegitimize those who would seek to destroy it for their own benefit, it is worth keeping and supporting. A well-run government staffed by true civil servants is an asset, not a deficit. Keynes would take great exception to the prevailing views of one Grover Norquist, the ul-

tra-conservative political scientist, who once quipped, "I don't want to abolish government. I simply want to reduce it to the size where I can drag it into the bathroom and drown it in the bathtub."

Which leads me to gun control. Once again we are beset by tragedy of our own making. Yes, we are all, in some sense, culpable for the deaths of those 14 students in Florida. We have allowed this democratic government that supposedly represents us to become nothing more than a flailing cockroach in Norquist's bathtub. Just listening to the absurd, essentially immoral) "arguments" coming from NRA-bought legislators makes me, a proponent of nonviolence, want to pick up a rock and smash that cockroach to death. Fortunately, cooler heads, like those remarkable high school students stepping forward, prevail. As a person who has been in the teaching profession for four decades, I can say that one thing I have learned is to step out of the way of freshly minted, aspiring, passionate young minds when they latch on to a cause. But not to leave them alone in the room. We can offer assistance and some guidance when requested.

In particular, we in Veterans For Peace can bring a strong voice to the gun control table. Many of us have witnessed firsthand what a culture dominated by assault weapons looks and feels like. Let me stop here and clarify a term—"assault weapon." I defer to Judy Rawlings, who, after listening to me try to parse out the difference between an automatic and semi-automatic weapon, said that simply, for her, an assault weapon is one designed to slaughter people. Period. Bingo. Of course. We are not talking shotguns or deer rifles here (I live in rural Maine) or even some handguns. Those could be considered tools designed for practical purposes that are used periodically and then put safely away. They are not fe-

continued on next page ...



Peace in Our Times

Peace in Our Times is published quarterly by Veterans For Peace. Bundles of 80 are \$40, and individual subscriptions are \$15/year. To donate, subscribe, or order bundles, visit peaceinourtimes.org or send a check to Veterans For Peace, 1404 North Broadway, St. Louis, MO 63102. Letters, poems, articles, and images may be submitted to takauff@gmail.com.

Editorial staff: Tarak Kauff, Managing Editor; Ellen Davidson, Mike Ferner, Becky Luening, Ken Mayers, Doug Rawlings

Website coordinator: Fred Nagel

Cost of War Should Make Us Rethink U.S. Foreign Policy

Veterans For Peace Executive Director Michael McPhearson addressed the Congressional Progressive Caucus Peace and Security Task Force and House Liberty Caucus Ad Hoc Hearing on the Authorization for Use of Military Force Feb. 27. Below is his testimony.

My name is Michael McPhearson. I am the Executive Director of Veterans For Peace. I served in the U.S. Army as a field artillery captain in the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division. I am here today to give you my perspective on the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF).

The AUMF must be repealed immediately. It would be the best policy for global security and our democracy.

I will never forget Sept. 11, 2001. I was working in New York City. Watching our office TV, I saw the first tower fall. I ran outside and heard people in the street screaming in horror as the second tower fell. I witnessed the fear people felt. But I must tell you that my greatest concern at that moment was not my own safety. I was most concerned with the heart and soul of my country. As part of the 1991 invasion of Iraq, I had seen firsthand and participated in the destruction and violence our military can unleash. I knew that my nation's response had the potential to be just as horrible and more damaging to the world than anything a group of terrorists could ever do. I also knew that there would be loud calls for revenge. I got down on my knees and prayed that the

Regiment, show that suicide can become a kind of contagion. At least 14 Marines from that unit have died by suicide.

We also know that, today, the number of veterans with multiple tours of combat duty is the largest in modern U.S. history, with more than 90,000 fighters who deployed four or more times. Studies show that their risk of committing suicide after they return soars, because they have a much harder time than other service members adjusting to everyday life back home.

And suicide does not end in military families with service members. Perhaps you heard about Carlos Arredondo, a father who in 2004 after being informed that his 20-year-old son, Lance Corporal Alexander Scott Arredondo was killed while serving in Iraq, doused a U.S. government van with gasoline and set it on fire while sitting inside. Fortunately, the Marines who informed him of his son's death were able to pull him out of the vehicle.

Carlos and his wife Melida are two of the kindest people I know. The unintended consequences of U.S. foreign policy were not done with the Arredondo family. On December 19, 2011, Arredondo's surviving son, Brian, died by suicide after battling depression and drug addiction ever since his brother's death. Though he never saw the battlefield, the pain of war killed Brian.

Having spent real time with Gold Star families, I am blessed not to know their pain, but I have felt it. I have cried with



Veterans For Peace Executive Director Michael McPhearson. Photo: Ellen Davidson

ting in the backseat and saw he was shot. Medical help did not arrive in time. He watched his son die.

I visited the home of a Sunni leader. One of his sons had been trying to work with U.S. forces and his community. According to another son, his brother met with U.S. forces several times. One day a misunderstanding took place and he was shot and killed. They were not sure why, but they told us they wanted justice. And if there was not justice from the United States, they would have justice themselves.

While there, we heard stories of torture and family members not sure where their loved ones had been taken. As a result, we visited Abu Ghraib. Of course, we could not get in, but there were dozens of people waiting outside to hear word of loved ones. They came every day. The scene both saddened and enraged me. The early part of my childhood was during the Vietnam War. Growing up in Fayetteville, N.C., home of the 82nd Airborne and Special Forces HQ, I was taught that the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong tortured our troops. We don't do things like that. Months later I was standing outside a facility where U.S. personnel were mistreating and torturing Iraqis.

Lastly, I want to talk about Rafaat. He

was a 12- or 14-year-old boy I met in Iraq who had been struck by shrapnel during the U.S. invasion. His family welcomed us into their home. They treated us with no malice as they explained what happened. The shrapnel blinded him in his right eye and mangled one of his legs. Doctors did the best they could to save it, but unless he received a higher level of care, he probably lost his leg. It was another heartbreaking moment.

All the stories I heard and the pain I witnessed are small examples of the thousands of stories that have and are happening as a result of U.S. wars in countries around the world. I do not see how this can be contributing to U.S. security and it is clearly immoral. Everything good I have been taught as a child and as an enlisted man and officer about our country is torn to shreds by these wars.

I sit here speaking to you today because I am fighting for the soul of my country. Is it too late to address the fears I had on September 11? Have we lost our soul? Have we distorted our democracy beyond repair? I don't know. I pray not. But I do know that a solid step in the right direction is to repeal the AUMF. History will remember this Congress in a more positive light if it does.

I got down on my knees and prayed that the nation's response would be measured and contemplative rather than vengeful and selfish.

nation's response would be measured and contemplative rather than vengeful and selfish.

The cost of war to people should compel us to rethink U.S. foreign policy and specifically these current wars. We claim to do this to save lives and protect people, but that is not what is happening. For example, the issue of suicide really stands out for me. I assume that you have all heard the number—21 or 22 veterans dying by suicide a day. That is 7,600 veterans a year and families directly impacted by war. I know a mother whose son used a shotgun to commit suicide. She was of course utterly devastated by it and it haunts her every day.

Many times, there is a profound guilt felt by those left behind after a suicide. I know this because I felt it after a soldier I talked to died. I did not really know him nor had I had the opportunity to spend much time talking to him, yet I asked myself, could I have done more or said something different?

Studies and real-life experiences like that of Second Battalion, Seventh Marine

them. Fernando del Solar is another parent I know. I met him not long after his son, Marine Lance Corporal Jesus Suarez del Solar, was killed in March 2003 when he stepped on a U.S. cluster bomb during the Iraq invasion. Fernando and I participated in a peace delegation to Iraq in December 2003 with military family members, U.S. veterans, and other U.S. peace activists. Fernando was able to visit the site where his son died. I believe it provided some solace, but not closure.

Thousands of U.S. families are going through this pain. There are thousands more service members and families facing mental and physical wounds.

I have also cried with Iraqis whose children were killed by U.S. forces. I can tell you the pain is the same. Families love each other. Parents love their children. Their children were not insurgents or enemies of the Iraqi government. They were innocent casualties caught in the crossfire of war. One father was simply driving home with his son from their family business. Suddenly, the rear window shattered. He looked back at his son sit-

Assault Weapons

... continued from previous page

tishes. They are not toys. They are not weapons that are used to kill other human beings en masse. Or to entertain.

So I am unequivocally in favor of a complete ban on assault weapons as defined above. How we can get to that point is, of course, a complex issue that is tailor-made for an intelligently, fully functioning democracy to discuss openly and civilly. Perhaps we put together a buyout program. Perhaps we set about retooling gun manufacturing plants so that they can pump out solar panels instead of AR-15s. Perhaps we put together multi-year curricula on nonviolence that can be used throughout our school systems (paying teachers to participate in Gandhian

workshops instead of issuing them passes to rifle ranges). Perhaps we all work on getting the Pentagon out of our heads (John Dear's nifty metaphor for militarism).

In any event, we need to act now. No more letting the issue get buried in mind-boggling state legislative committees led around by gun-manufacturing lobbyists. We need to stand beside our burgeoning generation of creative nonviolent activists spilling forth from our high schools. And forget that momentum-killing cry for "states' rights." Bullshit. We need a federal law banning assault weapons from our stores, from our schools, and, ultimately, from our lives. We in Veterans For Peace must take a public stand against this soul-warping scourge that is eroding our democracy. Now.

—Doug Rawlings

Raining on Trump's Parade

President Trump has asked the Pentagon to plan a military parade in Washington, D.C., on Veteran's Day, Nov. 11. Democrats have decried the cost and authoritarian implication, and antiwar groups are planning a countermarch. Ann Garrison of blackagenadreport.com spoke to Margaret Flowers, medical doctor, Green Party activist, and co-founder of the movement news website Popular Resistance, who is among those organizing the countermarch.

Ann Garrison: Margaret, does this countermarch have a name yet, and what can you tell us about the coalition organizing it?

Margaret Flowers: So far the coalition is just calling this the "No Trump Military Parade." Our goal is to get so many people signed up to come that Trump feels compelled to cancel it. If that doesn't happen, we hope that we can mobilize more people to come to Washington, D.C., to oppose it than Trump can mobilize to support it.

As far as the coalition goes, and this is still fairly young, we found that a number of organizations that Popular Resistance works with were organizing responses to the military parade. ANSWER put out a call for people to show up. Veterans For Peace and some of their allied organizations were organizing a veterans and indigenous peace march during that weekend, with a message to reclaim Armistice Day, which is what Veterans Day was initially. Interestingly, this is the 100-year anniversary of the first Armistice Day, the end of World War I.

World Beyond War was also getting people to sign on to oppose the parade,

in power. They use these issues for their own ends.

It's interesting, and I know that you're aware of this, that the Women's March was not a march against U.S. militarism. Among the so-called progressive Democratic Party candidates running in this year's midterms, I haven't seen anybody who has a strong antimilitarist platform. So there is a possibility that some of these Democratic Party groups will try to latch on to this effort and use it for their own purposes, but all the people and groups organizing this are opposed to the corporate duopoly war party.

I think it's important for us to make it clear that the United States has a long history of militarism, and that it has been escalating under recent presidents. Obama was worse than Bush. Trump is trying to outdo Obama. It's not a matter of who's in the White House or which party has the majority in Congress. It's that the United States is the largest empire in the world, and we have a very strong military machine that demands to be fed constantly. So even if some of those Democratic Party members sign on, they may be adding numbers, but hopefully not diluting the message.

AG: A Women's March on the Pentagon, which is not a reaction to Trump but to war and militarism, is scheduled for October 20–21, the 51st anniversary of the 1967 March on the Pentagon organized by the National Mobilization to End the Vietnam War. Will you be joining or supporting that march as well?

MF: We're very excited about the Women's March on the Pentagon. I think, like you, I refrained from participating in the previous women's marches because they

The people who are behind this are all groups who are strongly opposed to the corporate duopoly war party, and who have been working to revive the peace movement in the United States.

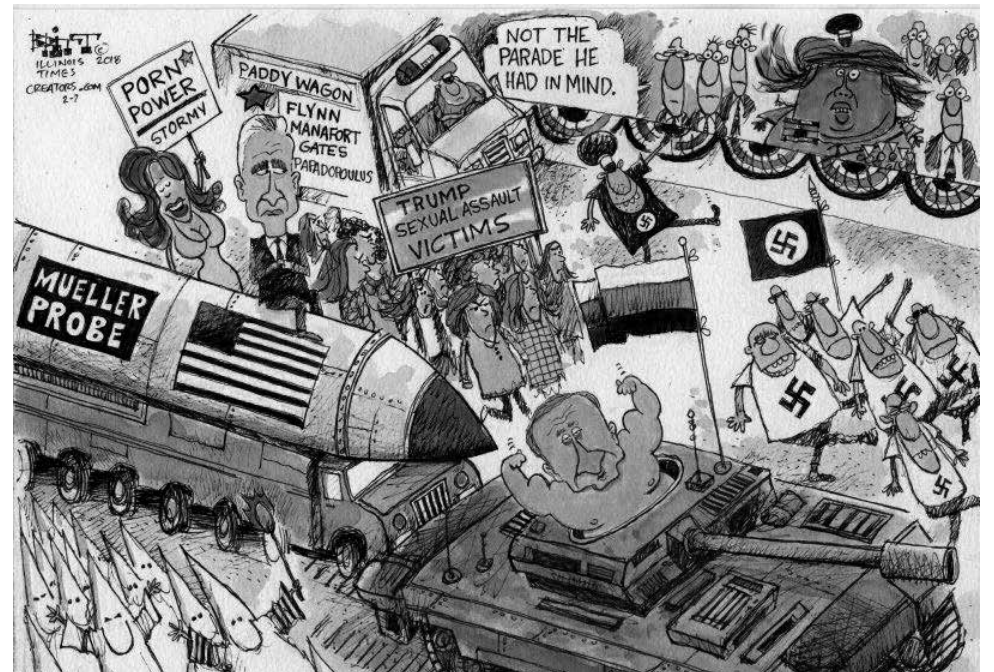
so we thought, "Why don't we bring all these people together and make this a big display of opposition to militarization both at home and abroad?" We had our first exploratory call last week and found that there was a lot of energy and a lot of unity in our messaging against U.S. imperialism, militarization, and austerity for public needs. The people who are behind this are all groups who are strongly opposed to the corporate duopoly war party, and who have been working to revive the peace movement in the United States.

AG: Some of those who identify as peace activists will no doubt say that this march is a reaction to Trump, not to the wars and weapons production that keep escalating no matter who's in the White House. What's your response?

MF: Now that President Trump is in office, that's the concern, because that's what the Democratic Party groups and the party itself do when Republicans are

were organized by people who were part of the power structure. It's been interesting to see what's going on with that, because people at the grassroots level didn't seem to be altogether on board with those who were leading those marches. But, again, there was no strong antimilitarism component to those marches. So we were very excited when Cindy Sheehan announced her Women's March on the Pentagon. I felt like, "Wow, now here's a women's march I'll actually feel comfortable participating in!" so Popular Resistance was one of the early organizations to sign on to that. We've been promoting it on our website, and I will be there, and we'll be supporting it in any way we can.

AG: Assuming Trump's parade goes forward, there will no doubt be a tremendous amount of international media coverage, and the optics will be grim for much of the world if there's no visible resistance. Will you be working on a media strategy



with that in mind?

MF: That's one of the main reasons we felt so compelled to organize around Trump's military parade. People around the world keep asking us, "Where is the antiwar movement in the United States? You guys are the aggressors, so why aren't you doing anything about what your country is doing all around the world?" So having this kind of energy around this military parade—this gross display and glorification of militarism—is an opportunity for us in the United States to show the world that there *is* opposition to U.S. empire and wars of aggression, including these so-called humanitarian interventions that so many progressives are supporting. And, in addition to having protests in Washington, D.C., we're reaching out to our international allies around the world and asking them to hold actions on that day as well. And of course there's a lot of international media in DC, and when we do actions on various issues, we tend to get more coverage from the international media than from the U.S. media. So we will definitely be reaching out to them.

AG: Do you think a countermarch will be allowed to get anywhere near the Pentagon parade, and have you considered that this might be a dangerous protest?

MF: The benefit of having coalition partners who are actually based in Washington, D.C., is that they can apply for permits as soon as the need arises, and permits are handed out on a first-come, first-served basis there. As soon as President Trump put out the message that he might have a military parade on Veterans Day, organizations that we work with quickly applied for permits in as many areas as they could think of where such a parade might happen. So we will have permits to be close to the parade, and we even applied for them before any groups that may come to support it.

As to whether it might be dangerous: the police in DC are fairly used to dealing with protest, and most of the them understand our First Amendment right to freedom of expression. That's not always the case; the police were very aggressive around Trump's inauguration, but I think they may regret that. The public is very largely with us, and a lot of people in the military oppose this gross display of militarization, this waste of money and time,

as well. If there's a large turnout, that's protective. The police will be a lot less likely to misbehave if there are a lot of people around.

AG: The peace movement all but completely faded from view during Obama's eight years in office, despite new U.S. wars in Libya and Syria, escalation of the U.S. war in Afghanistan, and the expansion of U.S. bases and militarism across the African continent. If the peace movement re-emerges under Trump, do you think it could survive the election of another Democratic Party president?

MF: It was difficult to see the antiwar movement all but disappear while Obama was president. Of course we were out there protesting anyway, and when we helped organize the occupation of Freedom Plaza in 2011, it included a very strong antiwar component. It was disappointing to see antiwar protesters get confused by a Democratic president who was such a militarist. So we just have to keep working at reviving and growing the antiwar movement here, and try to demonstrate that this goes across political parties, that both Democrats and Republicans are funded and lobbied by the weapons manufacturers and all the other elements of the military industrial complex. The 2018 military budget is \$700 billion, and it just keeps growing. It now eats up 57 percent of our discretionary spending, leaving only 43 percent for education, transportation, housing, and all our other human needs.

We need to demonstrate that this makes us less secure as a nation by creating more animosity toward us around the world and isolating us in the global community. Other nations are finally getting more courage to stand up and say they don't want to be bullied or controlled by us anymore. So [U.S. militarism] hurts every single person in the United States, as well as the masses of people suffering all the casualties and injuries and agony caused by U.S. wars. No matter who's in office, we have to push the United States to pull back our troops on foreign shores, close down our 800 or more military bases, and redirect our resources to human needs here at home and reparations for all the damage we've done around the world.

Visit notrumpmilitaryparade.us for more information.

By Maj. Danny Sjursen

I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing; it had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy.

—Frederick Douglass

I've lived a soldier's life. Moved seven times in 11 years. Fought two wars. Lost near a dozen soldiers in one way or another. And, well, lost faith in near everything I believed when it all began at the tender age of 17. In that time, I've sought to balance soldiering and scholarship. Perhaps that was my mistake.

It's almost over now. I'll leave that life soon enough, some 16 years, seven months, and 19 days since it all began at West Point, 50 miles up the river from New York City.

New Yorkers, of course, hardly know—or care—that the nation's military academy exists so near their global metropolis. They, especially the city's resurgent elites, inhabit a wholly different universe from the volunteer, professional soldiers who train, fight, and die in their name. To take the 45-minute ride northbound on the commuter rail along the Hudson is to traverse from one dimension to another, to a rather strange, martial world. The system is designed that way. Military men and women exist apart from the society they serve. They are a new, often familial warrior caste. Praetorians of the 21st century.

There's scant space for dissension in this closed, echoing realm of enthusiastic volunteers. Politicians order, warriors comply,

Unlearning War

the cycle continues. Only where has it gotten us—as an army, or, as a nation?

U.S. troops are now in 70 percent of the world's countries and engaged in active conflict—what we used to call war—in, by even a modest count, some seven countries. In 2017–18, we've killed and been killed in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Niger, and Pakistan. At least for starters.

Chalk up the first three as outright, though ongoing, defeats or stalemates. The other four are deadlocked, and, in

that all that effort, fear, and violence was for nothing, and that seeking to impose a foreign-backed centralized regime in rural Afghanistan has almost no historical track record of success. Just ask the Russians—or the British.

• That military actions and the U.S. gospel of hyper-interventionism doesn't, it turns out, stifle terrorism. That ultimately, foreign armies, by their very nature, generate unrest. That American deployments from West Africa to South Asia increased rather than stifled terror

U.S. troops are now in 70 percent of the world's countries and engaged in active conflict—what we used to call war—in, by even a modest count, some seven countries.

the case of Pakistan, slipping ever further from American influence. When a society wages war on a tactic—terrorism—don't expect decisive outcomes or victory parades (though our current president sure wants one). No; America—and Americans—have both signed up for eternal quagmire, and its beloved warriors (and their countless victims) will foot the bill.

I've been just another nobody along for the ride. And what a long, strange trip it's been. A few hundred books, thousands of articles, and too many dogma-altering experiences later, and this veteran doubts any of it was, or is, worth the cost. Unfortunately, one can't really go back and unlearn it all. Though sometimes, truthfully, I wish I could. When it comes to one's emotional health, perhaps ignorance really is bliss.

Is broad and deep education a blessing or a curse for a soldier on the sharp end of America's foreign wars? I carried Sartre and Camus in my rucksack through Kandahar province in Afghanistan and left more confused and melancholy than I'd arrived. What I've come to know, or believe, is all too disturbing. At times, I envy those among my peers and among the populace that neither know nor care about these inconvenient facts:

• That the war in Iraq was built on lies and waged without caution. That American arrogance fractured a fragile society and unleashed a sectarian civil war that's proved impossible to bottle back up. That the tortured bodies we found, and some that we made, were the refuse of obtuse American fantasies about armed democracy promotion.

• That all my poor boys really accomplished in Afghanistan was to secure one square kilometer of land for one short year. That despite the best Petraeus-speak and can-do military rhetoric, we enduringly protected exactly zero Afghans. That when the smoke cleared, the only things my troops lastingly left behind were three American lives and 11 American limbs. How I wish I could unlearn

liberal monsters and our lofty rhetoric rings hollow to the Yemeni children we're complicit in killing, through bombs, disease, and famine.

• That ultimately, violence begets violence, and when all is said and done, twice as many American soldiers will have died these last 16 years than the number of citizens who perished on 9/11. That, of course, exponentially more foreign civilians died at our military's hands, under their bombs or on account of instability the United States unleashed, than all American victims of terrorism in all of our country's brief history.

How I wish, sometimes, that I didn't know, or believe, all of that.

I've come a long way in my journey from faith to doubt and find myself now an apostate resident in the military monastery. There's temptation to fantasize, to consider the counterfactual, and to wonder if one were better off not knowing the futility of the modern soldier's life.

The faithful have it all backward. Doubt is hard. Belief is comforting, easier, less complicated. On the hard days, I envy the true believers. And, trust me, they're still out there, filling the ranks—from green lieutenants to grizzled generals.

How I miss the simplicity and serenity of blind patriotism and jingoistic nationalism.

Maj. Danny Sjursen is a U.S. Army strategist and former history instructor at West Point. He served tours with reconnaissance units in Iraq and Afghanistan. He has written a memoir and critical analysis of the Iraq War, Ghostriders of Baghdad: Soldiers, Civilians, and the Myth of the Surge.

Nightmare

By Doug Rawlings

Of course he pretends to remember nothing of the nightmare that drove him bolt upright screams so loud that he woke his wife. She told him the next morning she didn't dare touch him

He knows they will continue to come on by as they have done so over the years they can't help themselves, being ghosts after all. It's just that they keep jacking up the heat each pass through

He thinks of sand turning into liquid under temperatures so severe glass seems to appear out of nowhere. Maybe they think they can watch him from there that he's safe from their hands

But he knows they're taking their toll each time they sweep on through polishing their glass slowly into deadly mirrors. The observers becoming the observed and vice versa

acts and terror groups across the region.

• That the empire, always, by its very nature, ultimately comes home as our militarized domestic police patrol their beats like occupied territory. That we've learned to live with mass incarceration and mass shootings—things that only happen here—as a matter of course. That the real terrorism is on our streets, in our schools and lurking among us. That we can't lay the blame on immigrants, Muslims or any "other." That guns, violence and slaughter are as American as apple pie.

• That many of America's purported allies (like the Saudis) are themselves il-



We Never Stopped Talking

Dear Dad,

I think of how the war in Vietnam divided us. You were not only a proud father, but a decorated WWII Navy officer who served under Admiral Halsey in the Pacific. Who was I ... ? An angry young man with no life perspective. My friends and I marched against the war in Vietnam. We chanted: Hell no, we won't go! Power to the people! Take it from the greedy; Give it to the needy! What did war do to us, you and me?

We never stopped talking, but both of us endured many tense moments. My high school buddy and his father were nearly torn asunder; other friends told of parental relationships that simply collapsed. Such was the divide between our generations, and between us as men. Remember the shocking 1970 film, *Joe*? It sure captured the division in our hearts. When you realized fairly early on that the Vietnam War was wrong, I was pleased and proud, Dad.

I spoke with that same old high school friend again recently. We were astounded by what was revealed in Ken Burns' and Lynn Novick's Vietnam War series, now some 50 years later. It was a summary of what we already knew: The war was unjust and it was unwinnable. The pain that our leaders inflicted upon the innocent in their efforts to get reelected was unconscionable. Not wanting to appear weak, they threw brave American and Vietnamese lives away in the name of their campaigns.

There is no way to measure the senseless pain inflicted upon millions of American and Vietnamese families, no way to measure the division in families and communities caused by our senseless war. There is no way to measure the body count of both American and Vietnamese vets suffering homelessness, PTSD, and worse. There is

Depression

*is Smoke's voice
whispering
my name
in the dark
and I know
he's dying on me
not ten feet away
and I know
I cannot
get to him
and it's been
fifty, long,
fucking years,
and it looks like
we're both
still hoping
I can save him,
so he still
keeps
whispering
my name.*

—Dave Connolly



All of us marching were trying to do the same thing: to make one voice of many, and to make that voice heard.

no way to measure the destruction in Vietnam, or since in Iraq, in Afghanistan.

Dad, I once felt pride in America. If I knew that our leaders finally understood the destructive force of hubris, I could restore my pride. But I fear we as a nation have learned nothing.

There is a book, *From Perkasie to Vietnam*, that tells of Vietnamese soldiers and citizens "wasted" (killed). One can only guess how many of those killed were unarmed, ordinary citizens. We know about this. We know it was a form of genocide, and that crimes like these remain unprosecuted today. Those of us who marched in protest never bought into the "domino theory" of Communists taking over Southeast Asia. We believed the domino theory was manufactured by the United States to justify an unjust war. We protesters believed theirs was a war of independence, a war no different from our own war for independence. Why did it take so many years, and 58,000 American lives, to convince our leaders? And what of the 2,000,000 Vietnamese lives? There is no wall for them.

Can we blame those Vietnamese who may despise us still, who have taught their children to despise us? Never having been aware that we need ask forgiveness, the Buddhist Vietnamese culture seems to have forgiven us anyway. Meanwhile, our country still sinks into war after war, creating more and more children of war. Yet, no other war since Vietnam has so torn families apart.

To be honest, not even my peers all agreed with what we were doing, Dad. A friend of mine who was a Marine said that while he now views the war as unjust, back then he would have punched me out for demonstrating. Another newly enlisted friend had a fist fight with his peace-loving brother the night before leaving for basic training, never knowing if he'd return alive

to see his brother again. People openly raged over how to "beat those commies!" and whether we could or would. We were voices of reason, voices uncontaminated by agenda, willing to speak out against injustice. All of us marching were trying to do the same thing: to make one voice of many, and to make that voice heard.

Eugene McCarthy, an unsung hero who called for an end to the war, was also one of the uncontaminated voices. To his credit, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, in his memoir *The Fog of War*, admitted his role in the tragedy of Vietnam. (This film is available on the internet. I wish it were made a part of all high school curricula.)

Time has passed, but modern times are no different. The uncontaminated voices spoke clearly before the invasion of Iraq. Along with the steadfast voice of Hans Blix, we questioned the existence of "weapons of mass destruction." Their clarion call was ignored, U.S. hubris prevailed, and once again thousands of deaths and untold hardship resulted. Of course, the existence of "weapons of mass destruction" was eventually proven completely false, but not before the agenda of a very few warmongers came to fruition. We see, too, how the media fails us with, for example, the fabricated Gulf of Tonkin incident. How can we teach people to distinguish between voices that are uncontaminated and those that have agendas?

Though it might have better conveyed the messages of dissenting voices, I believe Ken Burns' and Lynn Novick's documentary is the beginning of a long-awaited, refreshing truth telling. One of the first truths is that our nation can learn, can change. I envision a foreign policy in which American values of caring and honesty reign. It would be an unprecedented healing event if

our government would admit its mistakes to all the families with lost and maimed loved ones, all the families torn apart by useless war. Other nations begin healing through apology. Without recognizing our fault, no learning will occur, and history will repeat itself, as has been proven. Will we ever find the moral vision to begin this healing process?

You are gone now, Dad. We never spoke of the division we both must have felt in 1967, and beyond. I wish you could hear me say thank you. Thank you, Dad, for your service. I miss you and wish you were here to share more of your trials and tribulations in the Pacific theater of WWII. Thank you for changing your opinion on Vietnam. A son could not have asked for a better role model.

If you were here, maybe you'd say, "Mark, you were indeed a patriot. I know when you stood up against the war I said you were un-American, but I know now you were a patriot. Thank you for speaking out when you and I disagreed. It must have been hard going against me. It must have been incredibly difficult to raise your voice against governance so embedded in war and be derided for that. Along with millions of others, your voice helped to spare more carnage in Vietnam."

Know that when I am at an event and hear "The Star Spangled Banner," Dad, I recall your proud Navy service and once stood in your honor. Sadly, I do not stand to honor our country anymore. I once felt that pride. Today, I yearn to find it in my heart.

Your loving son,
Mark

Mark Lichty, a lawyer, has long been involved in issues of social justice and change through organizations such as Common Cause and Project for Nuclear Awareness.

A Marine's Testimony

By Miles Megaciph

These days it almost seems like a former life ... over 20 years ago I was in the U.S. Marine Corps and served almost my full four years as an 0341 mortarman with the 3rd battalion, 8th Marine division based out of Camp Lejeune, N.C. Then it was among the most heavily deployed units in the fleet; luckily, I enlisted right after the first Gulf War and got out right before the second one jumped off. I served from 1992 until 1996, and was on Guantánamo Bay for one year (before it was being used as an indefinite internment camp) and also spent one year in Okinawa.

My year in Okinawa was filled with some grueling training in the Northern Training Area, very limited contact with my family (this is before smartphones and easy email services), restricted access from the full beauty and rich history of the island, and worst of all, false information passed down the chain of command

*America is the modern-day
Roman empire at the end
of its days.*

to me and my fellow Marines about the true wants and needs of the Okinawan people.

The entire time I was stationed there I saw protesters at the gates of our base at various times of the day, on any given day, but we were never told that these people represented the beliefs held by the majority of the island. The Okinawan people did not and still do not want American bases on their soil.

In 1995 a 12-year-old girl was raped by two Marines from my base and one sailor from another base. We were lied to by our commanding officers but eventually only found out the truth through hearsay. The worst part is that these three rapists were not tried in Okinawan court and essentially went free.

During my time in Okinawa I must have been in a dozen different fights, both on bases and in town. We destroyed property and injured numerous people, but never once was I or any of my fellow trouble makers held accountable for these actions, which endangered people and cost local business owners unjust sums of money in repairs.

I now know that the Okinawan people did not then want or need American military bases and don't want them now. Over 80 percent of Okinawa continuously polls against the bases and continued militarization of their island. The U.S. military is presently destroying a precious coral reef by dumping sand and dirt into Oura Bay in Henoko to build a new Air Force base. The Futenma Air Station (said to be one of the most dangerous in the world), being "replaced" by the one at Henoko, is unwanted and so is the new one. "Replaced" is in quotes because the current rumor is that Futenma won't even get shut down when the new base is completed.

America spreads lies as its flag flies haphazardly at over 800 bases around the world. America is the modern-day Roman Empire at the end of its days; overstretched with a military it cannot afford, and bloated with corruption and loathsome leaders. I am sure it might be difficult for you as Americans to think of your country, your homeland in this way. But just ask yourself, "Does Flint have clean drinking water yet?" or, "What has my government done to help Puerto Rico?"

There is a humanitarian and environmental crisis happening right now in Okinawa and across the world due to our country's wanton negligence and disregard for the environment. The continued deployment of military

forces to solve conflicts and the manner of foul behavior that comes along with military bases in foreign countries is a shameful display of our power and ignorance.

True peace cannot come from the end of a gun.

It is up to all of us to hold our country to a higher standard. We must demand that our country stop being an imperial power and stop ramping up its military. We as consumers must stop the continued funding of this war machine and demand, with our purchasing power, a truly

green revolution. We must NOT go to war with North Korea just because Mr. Small Hands tweets about it.

Maybe you will choose Okinawa for your next vacation. It and the people are beautiful! Just imagine how much more it would be without 32 military bases on its soil. Check out Will Griffin's Peace Report (peacereport.com) for incredible videos about Okinawa and much more about all things Peace.

Miles Megaciph, a member of Veterans For Peace, was on a VFP delegation to Okinawa in December 2017. He is a husband, father, rap artist, and ardent peace activist. His Okinawa rap video Nuchi Du Takara can be seen at megaciph.com.



Miles Megaciph speaks to Marines at the gates of Futenma Air Station in Okinawa while on a Veterans For Peace delegation in December 2017. Photo: Ellen Davidson

Corporate Welfare for General Dynamics

By Russell Wray

Maine politicians and officials should be working to protect and promote the interests and rights of its citizens. However, as a recent trial and pending legislation in Maine have clearly shown, some of these politicians and officials seem far more interested in advancing the wealth and power of an already extremely wealthy and powerful corporation.

That corporation is General Dynamics, one of the world's largest so-called "defense" contractors, and owner of Bath Iron Works. The pending legislation is a move to give General Dynamics another \$60 million in tax breaks, which will be paid for by the people of Maine. The trial was that of the Aegis 9, who were arrested

April 1, 2017, while peacefully protesting—along with others—BIW's public "christening," or celebration, of a newly built Navy Aegis destroyer.

There were many good reasons for protesting the celebration. One of those reasons is the ship's cost—close to \$2 billion. The U.S. military is already far and away the deadliest in the world. The United States spends more than the next eight largest national defense budgets in the world—combined! When is enough enough?

Then there are the exorbitant costs to the nation's environment resulting from the government's addiction to war-making: The Pentagon's vast carbon emissions are contributing mightily to climate disruption and the Navy's reckless use of sonar constitutes an assault on life in the oceans, to name just two.

And then there is the obvious toll of the U.S. government's over-the-top militarism on any real prospects for a more peaceful world.

For all those reasons, the Aegis 9 chose to use our First Amendment rights to voice our opposition to the public celebration of this destroyer of lives. Although all we did was stand with our protest signs roughly 10 feet in front of the BIW entrance gate, and people were able to easily walk around us, and some did so, the police, at BIW's behest, ordered us to leave. When we refused, we were arrested and charged with criminal trespass.

At the trial's conclusion, the judge upheld our constitutional rights, stating that the Bath police department had been improperly "outsourced to BIW," and that because

continued on page 10 ...



Russell Wray.

No Indigenous Women, No Women's Movement

By Sarah Sunshine Manning

It is no secret that, beginning with the first wave of feminism, the women's movement has been a white woman's crusade. While white women championed suffrage in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, black and indigenous women still were fighting for their personhood, not yet even considered human by the white race and simply not in the privileged position to be discontented with their inability to vote.

Still today, white and upper-class women's issues stand in stark contrast to the issues of many indigenous and black women. In today's women's marches across the nation, scores of white women express their feminist vigor wearing pink pussy hats, a rebuff to Donald Trump's "grab 'em by the pussy" comment from a 2005 "Access Hollywood" recording that emerged publicly shortly before the 2016 presidential election. Groups of indigenous women stood in visible contrast at these marches, wearing red in honor and remembrance of the epidemic of missing and murdered indigenous women (MMIW) in the United States and Canada, a tragedy left unspoken about by the masses of white women and all of the mainstream press.

Many Native American women floated through the marches in floor-length ribbon skirts or their traditional tribal attire, long hair down their backs or fixed in traditional style. But indigenous women don't just appear different in their politics. Today, the goals of indigenous women are as disconnected—if not different—as they were in the first, second and third waves of feminism.

The term "feminism" itself continues to be debated in tribal communities. Some reject the term, and other indigenous women qualify their feminist politics with the more appropriate term "indigenous feminism."

In 2000, indigenous scholar Laura Tohe of the Diné (Navajo) wrote: "There is no word for feminism in my language," affirming, "There was no need for feminism because of our matrilineal culture." With the Diné, the women traditionally owned the property. As with virtually all precolonial indigenous cultures, to be a mother among the Diné was to be a creator, a tremendous honor and privilege, not the burden or reductive societal role many white women lamented in the 1970s.

The lived experiences of indigenous women have been and continue to be different from those of white women. Regardless of this disparity, indigenous women bring

valuable and necessary contributions to this most recent wave of American feminism.

Indigenous women—like Tohe and those wearing red in ongoing demonstrations across the continent in honor of missing and murdered indigenous women—seek to rematriate indigenous spaces and realities, or reconnect to matriarchy and the egalitarian roots of this land. Rematriation is a process of recognition that matriarchy begins first with the acknowledgement of the earth as mother to all life. When the earth, a feminine source, is honored and respected, balance is achieved at the most foundational level of human existence.

Indigenous feminists know that the patriarchy alone has not oppressed and ravaged indigenous women and their communities. A much deeper and more intricate system of power is responsible for the last five centuries of physical and spiritual assaults on the first women of this land and

black women and indigenous women set themselves apart from white feminism by pointing to its failings for all women.

"Keep your pussy hats off my feminism," wrote Taylyn Washington-Harmon, a black woman who did not participate in the women's march this year, in an article for *Self*: "There is still a lot of progress to be made when it comes to pushing for a feminism that is truly intersectional, inclusive of women and femmes of color, and welcoming and protective of trans and gender non-conforming women," she explained.

Some of the women's marches, though, did some things right this year, prioritizing intersectionality and welcoming to the event a rematriation of the space—an acknowledgement of the first women, recognizing the indigenous women of that particular land. This is an important start to deepening and revolutionizing the women's movement.

In downtown Reno, Nev., women of the Paiute, Washoe, and Shoshone tribes led the march, with or-

So long as the white-led feminist movement does not center the discussion of racism in its layers of politics, sexism will remain attached to this country's racist roots.

their entire communities. Arriving on so-called American shores in 1492, settler colonialism brought patriarchy, capitalism, racism, and rugged individualism. All of those systems have devastated indigenous nations and cultures. This same interrelated system of power, many indigenous people understand, is responsible for human rights violations across all genders and cultures.

Moving forward, white feminists must realize that racism and sexism do not exist separately. So long as the white-led feminist movement does not center the discussion of racism in its layers of politics, sexism will remain attached to this country's racist roots. Many more overwhelming waves of feminism will come and go after this one, devoid of the core understanding of the interrelated threads of American inequity and power imbalance.

In 1972, Joan Didion wrote an important essay, "The Women's Movement," that expressed distaste for the white-led women's movement of that era. Didion saw a contrast between women of color's feminism struggling out of necessity and white women's feminism lacking the same urgency.

Not much has changed since Didion's critique. Today,

nately dressed jingle dress dancers charting the path for the crowd in their healing dresses, indigenous men and women trailing behind them in traditional song.

In Seattle, indigenous women of Pacific Northwest tribes led the march with red banners for MMIW. Later in the program, many spoke out, through microphones with sound reverberating over the crowd, speaking on the epidemic of missing and murdered indigenous women and ongoing struggles in their communities that have long been ignored.

In Minneapolis, Korina Barry, an Anishinaabe woman who is a candidate for the state legislature, spoke to a massive crowd, acknowledging missing and murdered indigenous women and the indigenous fight against oil pipelines in the state. She also acknowledged that where the marchers gathered that day was upon the beloved territory of the Dakota people, exiled from their home state of Minnesota after the 1862 Dakota conflict.

In several other marches across the nation, indigenous women and their allies rematriated the space, recalling a time when women and the earth were honored. Yet rematriation only can happen with indigenous women at the helm. With rematriation comes a recognition of so much more than those women who came first. With rematriation comes the deepest recognition of all abuses against humanity, beginning with the indigenous peoples of that land. Each space is recognized as the beloved homelands of the first human beings nearly annihilated for the greed of the American man. The understanding of all abuses fans out from there.

When white feminists and all feminists alike bear down to do the consistent work of recognizing that the land upon which they stand is indigenous land, the women's movement will make more substantive progress. In fact, all social movements will progress.

Wherever women's marches are, wherever feminist conversations are, wherever social movements are, remember indigenous women, and remember indigenous peoples.

Acknowledge them.

Then pass the mic.

Originally published at truthdig.org

Sarah Sunshine Manning is a citizen of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation in Idaho and Nevada and a descendent of the Chippewa-Cree, and Hopi tribes. She is an independent journalist, a longtime contributor to Indian Country Media Network, and a resident of the Lake Traverse Indian Reservation in South Dakota.



Roxanne White from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Washington leads the Womxn's March in Seattle Jan. 20. Photo by Matthew S. Browning

Who Was Marjory Stoneman Douglas?



By Peter Dreier

There's nothing on the Parkland, Fla., Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School website about the woman whose name adorns the school, so its students may not realize that in rising from last week's tragedy to speak truth to power, they are following in Douglas' activist footsteps.

Douglas would certainly see a bit of herself in Emma Gonzalez, the poised and eloquent young woman whose speech electrified her classmates, teachers, parents, and the whole country at a Fort Lauderdale rally only days after a gunman entered her school and killed 17 people.

"If the President wants to come up to me and tell me to my face that it was a terrible tragedy and how it should never have happened and maintain telling us how nothing is going to be done about it," said the 18-year-old senior, "I'm going to happily ask him how much money he received from the National Rifle Association."

Douglas, who challenged the political and business establishment of her day, would be proud of the students' courageous efforts to galvanize a movement for gun control, which now includes a nationwide walkout by students and teachers scheduled for April 20.

Douglas was a journalist, writer, feminist, environmentalist, and progressive activist, best known for her staunch defense of the Everglades against efforts to drain it and reclaim land for development.

Born in Minneapolis in 1890, Douglas attended Wellesley College, where she earned straight A's and was elected "Class Orator," graduating in 1912. It was at Wellesley that she first got involved in the women's suffrage movement.

In 1915 she moved to Miami to work for *The Miami Herald*, which was owned by her father. The next year she joined the American Red Cross in Europe in the midst of World War I. She spent much of her time writing articles for the Associated Press from France, Italy, and the Balkans. When the war ended, she remained in Paris to care for displaced war refugees. That experience, she later wrote in her autobiography, "helped me understand the plight of refugees in Miami 60 years later."

Returning to Miami in 1917, Douglas continued working at the *Herald*, and jumped into the struggle for women's rights. That year she traveled to Tallahassee with three other women to campaign for the women's suffrage amendment before Florida state legislators.

"We had to speak to a committee of the House, which we did," she recalled in a 1983 interview. "It was a big room with men sitting around two walls of it with spittoons between every two or three. And we had on our best clothes and we spoke, as we felt, eloquently, about women's suffrage and it was like speaking to blank walls. All they did was spit in the spittoons. They didn't pay any attention to us at all."

(Although the 19th Amendment to the

so-called "women's issues." She rebelled, insisting on covering more hard-hitting topics, and was soon writing editorials, columns, and articles that expressed her concern for civil rights, better sanitation, women's suffrage, and responsible urban planning. In 1923, she wrote a ballad lamenting the death of a 22-year-old vagrant who was beaten to death in a labor camp, titled "Martin Tabert of North Dakota Is Walking Florida Now," that was printed in the *Herald* and read aloud during a session of the Florida Legislature, which passed a law banning convict leasing, in large part due to her writing.

After leaving the *Herald* to become a freelance writer in 1923, she published more than 100 short stories and nonfiction articles

"Be a nuisance where it counts," Douglas once said. "Be depressed, discouraged, and disappointed at failure and the disheartening effects of ignorance, greed, corruption and bad politics—but never give up."

U.S. Constitution, giving women the vote, was adopted in 1920, Florida did not officially ratify it until 1969.)

Post-World War I Miami was still a small Southern city, governed by Jim Crow laws, with fewer than 20,000 residents. Many Miami police officers were members of the Ku Klux Klan, which was gaining momentum. One night Douglas was driving back from the beach with her father when they came upon the KKK preparing to march in their masks and sheets.

"A masked man on horseback rode up in front of my father and said, 'this street is closed,' and my father said 'Get out of my way!' and drove right straight ahead, through them and scattering them and everything; they couldn't stop him," she recalled years later. "We were all yelling and screaming in defiance, we were so mad."

Despite his liberal sympathies, Douglas' father initially relegated her to writing for the paper's "society" page, covering weddings, tea parties, and other

in the *Saturday Evening Post* and other popular magazines, as well as several novels and a number of books on environmental topics. Her most influential work, the 1947 bestseller *The Everglades: River of Grass*, "changed forever the way Americans look at wetlands," according to her *New York Times* obituary. The book transformed popular views of the Everglades from a worthless swamp to a treasured river. Many environmentalists have compared it to Rachel Carson's influential book *Silent Spring*, published 15 years later. "There would most likely be no Everglades wilderness without her," the *Times* noted.

In 1941, Douglas wrote the foreword to the Work Projects Administration's guide to the Miami area, part of the New Deal's controversial Depression-era Federal Writers' Project American Guide series, designed both to provide jobs for out-of-work writers and to compile detailed histories and descriptions of the nation's cities, regions, and cultures. Douglas served as the

Miami Herald's book review editor from 1942 to 1949 and as editor for the University of Miami Press from 1960 to 1963.

According to a profile of Douglas on the National Park Service website:

In the 1950s, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers rose to the top of her list of enemies. In a major construction program, a complex system of canals, levees, dams, and pump stations was built to provide protection from seasonal flooding to former marsh land—now being used for agriculture and real estate development. Long before scientists became alarmed about the effects on the natural ecosystems of south Florida, Douglas was railing at officials for destroying wetlands, eliminating sheetflow of water, and upsetting the natural cycles upon which the entire system depends.

To do battle with the Army Corps of Engineers and others, in 1969, at the age of 79, Douglas founded Friends of the Everglades. One of its first campaigns was to protest the construction of a jetport in the Big Cypress portion of the Everglades. President Richard Nixon scrapped funding for the project due to the efforts of Douglas and her environmentalist colleagues.

She continued to work to preserve the Everglades for the rest of her life. Her tireless activism earned her the nickname "Grande Dame of the Everglades" as well as the hostility of agricultural and business interests looking to benefit from land development in Florida.

In 1948, angered by the fact that many black residents of Coconut Grove, the racially segregated section of Miami, had no running water or sewers, Douglas led a successful campaign to pass a law requiring all Miami homes to have toilets and bathtubs. She also set up a loan operation for the black residents of Coconut Grove to borrow money interest-free to pay for plumbing work.

Douglas was a charter member of the South's first American Civil Liberties Union chapter in the 1950s. In the 1970s she campaigned for the Equal Rights Amendment, urging the state legislature to ratify it. In 1974 she cofounded the Friends of the Miami-Dade Public Libraries and served as its first president. In the 1980s Douglas lent her support to the Florida Rural Legal Services, a group that worked to protect migrant farm workers, especially those employed by the sugar cane industry near Lake Okeechobee.

In 1985 Douglas campaigned to get the Dade County School Board to provide a building for the Biscayne Nature Center. Six years later, the Florida Department of Education endowed \$1.8 million for the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Biscayne Nature Center in Crandon Park. The headquarters of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in Tallahassee is called the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building.

Broward County named its new high school for the 100-year-old Douglas in 1990. Among many awards, she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Bill Clinton in 1993. She died at age 108 in 1998.

Several books—including *An Everglades Providence: Marjory Stoneman* continued on page 10 ...

Militarism Is Seductive

By Ken Mayers

Militarism is a seductive evil that has afflicted most countries throughout history. I know of its seductive power because, as a young man, I was seduced into the Marine Corps. But the Marine Corps actually educated me about the role the United States plays in the world as a lying, hypocritical bully.

America has been in 19 wars since World War II. Over nine million men, women, and children have been killed by American forces in these wars.

In 2016 alone, the country dropped an estimated 26,000 bombs in seven countries, none of which had attacked the United States.

The United States stations troops in nearly 150 countries and spends more on its military budget than China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, India, France, the United Kingdom, Japan, and Germany combined.

The United States is also the world's largest merchant of death, with nearly 60 percent of total arms sales.

Wars present the most visible impact of militarism, but not the only one.

At home, our police forces are being increasingly militarized. Nearly 90 percent of American cities with populations above 50,000 have SWAT teams, four times the level

of the mid-1980s. The ACLU found that the value of military equipment in American police departments rose from \$1 million in 1990 to nearly \$450 million in 2013. I personally saw the effects of this militarization when I went to Ferguson, Mo., the week Michael Brown was killed.

Similarly, American popular culture displays the ubiquity of militarism with the steady increase of JROTC programs in our schools, the privileges extended to military recruiters in schools without such programs, and the proliferating tributes to troops offered at athletic events and other public venues.

Less visible are the opportunity costs of our militarism. Over 60 years ago, President Eisenhower said, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed."

One example: in January 2017, the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness found approximately 2500 homeless individuals. New Mexico median rental costs at the time were roughly \$800 per month. Thus the \$123 million cost of one F35C fighter plane could cover two years of rental for every homeless person in New Mexico. And the damned plane doesn't even work!

Ken Mayers, a retired Marine Corps Major, co-founded the Santa Fe Veterans For Peace and has par-



Edward Kuekes' 1953 Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoon 'Aftermath.'

ticipated in VFP delegations to Palestine, Okinawa, and Standing Rock.

Corporate Welfare

... continued from page 7

the Bath police order to leave BIW's property during this public event was based solely on BIW's objection to our lawful political expression, the order itself was unlawful. In the end, justice prevailed when Justice Billings granted the motion to acquit all of the defendants.

So that was the trial.

General Dynamics Pleads Poverty

The pending legislation is LD 1781, sponsored by Rep. Jennifer DeChant (D-Bath), which would provide General Dynamics with another \$60 million in tax breaks over the next 20 years. Since 1997, this same corporation has already received more than \$200 million in state and local tax breaks (though employment at BIW has decreased considerably since that time) as well as a huge corporate tax break from the Trump administration with the recent passage of the federal tax bill. Yet it is once again looking for a handout from the taxpayers of this cash-strapped state.

General Dynamics claims it needs this additional tax break to keep BIW competitive. But a look at the facts will show this claim to be false. BIW is one of just two companies that build destroyers for the Navy, and it received more federal contract dollars in 2017 than in any year since 2011—more than \$2 billion. It would seem that BIW is doing just fine.

A quick look at General Dynamics finances also shows it is doing quite well, to put it mildly. Its annual revenues are estimated at \$31 billion—more than four times Maine's entire annual budget. Between 2013 and 2016, with plenty of available cash on hand, General Dynamics management spent \$9.4 billion buying back its own stock. And in 2016, its CEO took home \$21 million. Unlike so many in Maine, this corporation is not hurting for money.

Shouldn't Maine's politicians and officials be working to protect and promote the interests and rights of its citizens, not making them fund, through their hard-earned cash, more corporate welfare for General Dynamics?

Russell Wray of Hancock, Maine, volunteers with Citizens Opposing Active Sonar Threats (COAST), and is an associate member of Veterans For Peace and one of the Aegis 9.

Letters to the Editor

... continued from page 2

democratic form of government to flee to the North.

I went on to describe how the U.S. government had destroyed virtually every building in "North Korea" during the so-called "Police Action" and had brought in a fascist to "govern" the South in order to establish a regime that would be loyal to the wealthy classes from the United States. I asked him whether he would not be somewhat "crazy" if such a thing had happened to us here in the United States, in his native sharecropper Tennessee. He stared at me in astonishment and responded "Yes, I certainly would!"

Mr. Hicks then told me about his brother who had served in the U.S. Army in the South Pacific and had come home a troubled boy. "My brother repeatedly told stories about being ordered to shoot Japanese soldiers whom they had taken captive and about how morally violated he had felt upon doing so." Gene told me that those memories had led his sorrowful brother to an early death. That was when he began to weep and I moved closer and held him in my arms, whereupon his entire body relaxed and he wept his poor heart out. I encouraged him to cry and he did, without restraint. When it had passed he related that never in all these years had he known (or shown) how sad he was about his brother.

After a few minutes passed he asked me about the words on my jacket, "Veterans For Peace," and I told him about us. He pulled out his cell phone and insisted that I take down his caretaker daughter's phone number and call her to arrange a meeting so that he could meet the members of our Austin chapter.

My God, I love this old fella. I do get myself into some awkward situations, virtually every time I go to the VA. Bring it on!

Doug Zachary
VFP Chapter 66, Austin

Bac Ninh

Here's a story you don't have to hear but it's on my mind. One late night in 1966 Saigon sent us a coded message, as Saigon did every night, containing the coordinates of the next day's targets. The other airmen and I in the 388 TFW target room divvied up the targets and went to work. When the pilots came in for their predawn briefing I had charts ready for the flight going after Bac

Ninh Rail Road Interdiction Point. Charts with the target symbol, and with the defense perimeters of NVN AAA and SAM sites, and a target photo.

I worked on other targets that night but I remember Bac Ninh because our flight of four F-105s expended all ordnance yet missed the target, a railroad bridge. In fact we didn't take it out until the third try.

Last week a friend of mine, an American veteran of our war in Vietnam who lives in Hanoi and leads a project to educate people on how to handle unexploded ordnance, or UXO, sent me a Vietnam news article that told of a bomb left over from the raids on Bac Ninh going off and killing a bunch of people and taking down a bunch of buildings. So even as I tell you how good my life is, I'm still destroying lives over there.

But my life is good, and I'd go completely nuts if I dwelled too long on those years, yet I owe it to everyone to tell about them, to work at my writing so I can articulate those times, so we can stop letting it continue to happen.

Denny Riley
VFP Chapter 69, Bay Area

Marjory Douglas

... continued from page xx

Douglas and the American Environmental Century by Jack Davis (2009), *The Swamp: The Everglades, Florida, and the Politics of Paradise* by Michael Grunwald (2006), and her autobiography, *Marjory Stoneman Douglas: Voice of the River*, written with John Rothchild (1987)—tell the story of this remarkable fighter for social and environmental justice.

"Be a nuisance where it counts," Douglas once said. "Do your part to inform and stimulate the public to join your action. Be depressed, discouraged, and disappointed at failure and the disheartening effects of ignorance, greed, corruption and bad politics—but never give up."

The students at Douglas High may not know it, but in translating their anguish into activism, they are carrying on in the tradition of their school's namesake.

Peter Dreier teaches politics and chairs the Urban and Environmental Policy Department at Occidental College. His latest book is *The 100 Greatest Americans of the 20th Century: A Social Justice Hall of Fame*.

The Tail Wagging the Dog

By W.D. Ehrhart

I was dismayed to hear that Florida's Republican governor had signed a bill raising the age of gun purchase from 18 to 21, extending a three-day waiting period, and banning "bump stocks" while at the same time authorizing teachers to carry firearms, a bill that manages to be at once both cowardly and insane.

Cowardly in that the "gun control" pro-

happens when people start shooting. Even with the vaunted training I received in the Corps, I can tell you that it takes tremendous willpower and self-control to remain functional when someone is shooting at you.

Now picture a school cafeteria where someone is blasting away with an AR-15 and several 30-round magazines. Children are dead. Children are wounded. Blood is everywhere. People are scream-

"Indeed, the NRA is the most insidious and lethal terrorist organization on earth, and it is perfectly legal, operates in the open, spends millions of dollars buying spineless politicians, and blames gun violence on everyone and everything under the sun except the guns."

visions are all but meaningless: raising the age of purchase has no practical impact because a shooter can get something with which to shoot easily enough; consider that the 20-year-old shooter in Sandy Hook used an assault rifle his mother had purchased legally. And one can easily fire a semi-automatic weapon 60 to 100 times a minute simply by pulling the trigger for each shot. Pulling a trigger doesn't take very long.

Meanwhile, arming teachers as a solution to school shootings would seem utterly unbelievable if it were not actually happening. Witness this new Florida law.

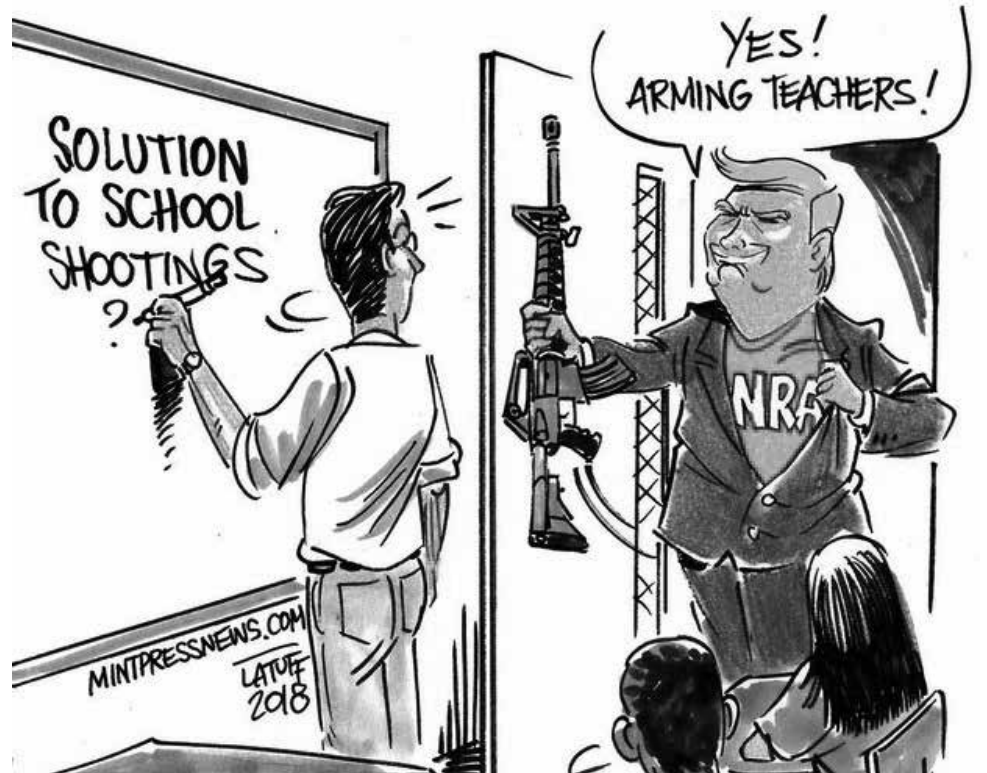
As a Marine veteran of combat in Vietnam, I have an understanding of what

ing and crying and running helter-skelter. Pandemonium such as you cannot imagine unless you have ever been under fire.

And you think some high school biology teacher is going to step into this situation, calmly pull out his or her 9-millimeter pistol, take careful aim, and deftly kill the child who is blazing away? Cool thinking, expert marksmanship, steady nerves. Problem solved. Right? In your dreams.

Yet 18 states allow K-12 teachers to carry firearms on the job. Or does Florida make it 19?

But here's the best part. The day after the Florida bill was signed, I woke up to



discover that the National Rifle Association has filed a federal lawsuit blocking this new law because, says the NRA, it violates the Second Amendment by punishing law-abiding citizens for the actions of a few deranged wackos.

Yet I am a law-abiding citizen, and I am being punished every day, having to live in fear of being gunned down in the school where I teach, or at the mall, or at a Flyers hockey game, or a rock concert, or anywhere else in these United States of America because of the deranged wackos of the NRA who think the Second Amendment gives them the right to make millions of law-abiding citizens live in terror on a daily basis.

Indeed, the NRA is the most insidious and lethal terrorist organization on earth, and it is perfectly legal, operates in the open, spends millions of dollars buying

spineless politicians, and blames gun violence on everyone and everything under the sun except the guns.

Look, you want to have bolt-action hunting rifles? Okay. Shotguns? Okay. Handguns, even though most firearms deaths are caused by handguns? Okay. But AR-15s, AK-47s, and their ilk? They're not called "hunting rifles." Or "self-defense rifles." They're called "assault rifles." They are designed to do one thing: kill as many people as possible in the shortest time possible. The Marine Corps didn't give me a deer rifle in Vietnam, or a shotgun, or even a pistol. I was given an M-16 assault rifle. My job was to kill people with it.

The Second Amendment gives the people the right to keep and bear arms, but it qualifies that right by placing it within the context of a well-regulated militia. Neither Devin Kelley nor Adam Lanza nor Stephen Paddock nor any other of these mass killers belonged to a well-regulated militia.

And the amendment doesn't say that Tom, Dick, and Harry have the right to own 20 or 30 or 50 high-powered assault rifles. Or even one high-powered assault rifle. It doesn't give people the right to own bazookas or M-60 machine guns or 81-millimeter mortars. Why should any civilian be allowed to own a weapon that is designed to do the same thing as bazookas, machine guns, and mortars?

When will law-abiding, responsible, patriotic Americans finally decide to put a stop to the NRA tail wagging the American dog? When will we throw out of office the craven politicians who kowtow to an organization that terrorizes the rest of us daily?

And as for arming teachers: When I joined the Marines, I expected to be given a weapon and trained how to use it. When I became a teacher, I did not expect to be expected to kill my students. If you expect me to do that, you are stark-raving mad.

W.D. Ehrhart is an American poet, writer, scholar and Vietnam veteran. He has written many books of poetry and prose including Vietnam-Perkasie: A Combat Marine Memoir.



At the March for Our Lives in Washington, D.C., March 24. Photo: Ellen Davidson

Demonstrations Across the Country Demand Action on Gun Violence

Marching for Our Lives





Some Simple Common Sense from a Cop

By Erik Lobo

I waited over a month now since 17 students and staff were shot to death and another 17 wounded at a high school in Parkland, Fla. I read and saw on TV many reports on this incident. I just want to point out a few things before joining the March or Our Lives here in Chicago tomorrow.

I spent 30 years working as a cop—in the 1980s in northern New Mexico, and in the '90s back home in Chicago in the projects. For about 17 years I was shot at many, *many* times. I'm glad to say I never fired my weapons on duty. Why? Shooters had other people around them, or the shots came from house or apartment windows—no clear shot for me.

I heard “president” Trump and others spout pure idiocy on how to make schools and other places safer. I attended two police academies. At each one I had over 400 hours of weapons training. There was also regular ongoing training on shoot/don't shoot scenarios and range qualifications.

I was a teacher's aide and

worked maintenance in schools sporadically over the years. My father was a teacher, coach, and principal for over 50 years. My sister's been teaching about four decades so far. No teacher I know wants to carry a gun at school. What kind of training would they get? As a cop, I don't want to respond to a “shots-fired” call and see people running around, inside or out, with guns. Been there several times. Didn't know who was who. Almost shot at a few civilians that were not perpetrators.

So then I hear Trump criticize one cop who didn't run into the school; I think, who in the hell is he to talk? I tripped over cops a few times while going toward the gunfire, and I didn't criticize them. Then Trump said he would have run in the door, with or without a gun. I did run in the door many times. There were cops I felt good about being with in tough situations and those I didn't want there. I believe Trump would run the other way, leaving a trail of urine.

The fact is that during the 10-year ban on sales of so-called assault weapons, gun deaths went down significantly. Since Con-

gress failed to renew the ban, the deaths went back up. By the way, when I first got certified, the NRA sent me a free membership in 1983. I sent it back.

Florida, under Gov. Jeb Bush, enacted a “stand your ground” law that basically said if somebody makes you nervous you can just shoot them. Many states are now looking at enacting more open-carry and concealed-carry laws. Some have made it legal to go into churches, colleges, and bars armed. In New Mexico, I couldn't go into a bar off-duty with my weapon.

There's a huge amount of stories to prove more guns do *not* make people safer. Some years ago in Colorado a man opened fire in a dark movie theater. Some morons said if others there had shot back it would have been a good thing. Imagine cops responding to that.

One more point here: The Second Amendment refers to “a well-regulated militia.” Nowadays that's the National Guard. And they report to an armory to get their weapons.

We need some simple common sense here, people.



Hundreds of thousands marched in cities and towns across the United States and around the world March 24. These photos are from the largest action, in Washington, D.C. Photos: Ellen Davidson

Never Forget Nagasaki

By Rory Fanning

In 2018, the average age of a *hibakusha*—the Japanese word for a survivor of the atomic blasts at Hiroshima and Nagasaki—is 81. When you speak with these survivors, you'll most likely hear the story of what it feels like to have an atomic bomb dropped on you as a six-year-old child.

Experts say six is the age kids first begin to process the concept of time. Time, the impact it has on our memories, our priorities, and our sense of responsibility for the crimes of our governments, is something I've been thinking about a lot.

Veterans For Peace sponsored Marine Force Recon veteran Michael Hanes, our translator Rachel Clark, and myself on a goodwill trip to Japan. I'm a two-tour veteran of the U.S. war and occupation of Afghanistan with the 75th Ranger Regiment.

For the second year in a row, I traveled there to apologize, especially to the Hibakusha and their families. As insignificant as an apology feels 72 years after the bombing, it also seems like one of the most substantive things we can do to prevent such an attack from happening again.

Mike and I did not give the order to drop the bombs. We did not fight as soldiers in the war that dropped those bombs. However, we were pawns of the U.S. war machine in its latest, longest war.

We both partook in wars that have killed over a million people, the majority of them civilians. We signed up to fight terrorism, but soon realized we were the ones doing the terrorizing.

We believe our role in the war on terror connects us in some way the 140,000 civilians who were killed within days of the atomic blasts. We believe that the deaths of so many civilians in both of these wars should never have happened.

The consensus argument holds that the United States dropped those bombs on so many civilians in Hiroshima and Nagasaki to end the war and save millions of lives. This claim cannot be justified.

The war in the Pacific had ended by January of 1945. The Japanese were starving and the country could no longer manufacture what it needed to continue the fight. The United States had the ultra-secret purple-and-red Japanese cyphers transmitting this information. High-level government officials offered surrender terms to Douglas MacArthur a full seven months prior to the bombing, terms nearly identical to those accepted in Japan Bay on September 2, 1945.

This history remains largely untaught, just as the fact that the Taliban surrendered within months of the initial

American invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 remains untaught—to say nothing of the lies that led us into the Iraq War. Seventy years separate World War II and the global war on terror, but the cliched line nevertheless applies to both: “Truth is the first casualty of war.” This sense of being lied to, of being manipulated into participating in so much death and destruction, drove us to Japan.

As we uncovered the lies of the war we fought, we soon wanted to uncover the lies of other wars, especially the “Good War,” the one that is so often used to justify others. Learning the truth can only provide so much closure; stopping the lies that lead to war became our priority.

We hoped the trip would remind ourselves, those we met, and even those fighting in the United States' endless wars around the world that ordinary Americans, Japanese, Iraqis, Afghans, North Koreans, Syrians, Nigerians, Chinese—the list of countries the United States occupies and fights is lengthy, so take your pick—have infinitely more in common with each other than with our nations' leaders. This message seems especially relevant in President Trump's world of nationalism, white supremacy, and nuclear threats.

The Hibakushas' Words

So often, we're asked to remember the few times the United States has been attacked on its own soil. Never forget 9/11. Never forget Pearl Harbor.

Rarely are we asked to remember when we dropped two atomic bombs on civilian populations. Maybe every American should visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Time makes people forget or at least take things less seriously, and that should never be the case with nuclear weapons.

When the Hibakusha found out two American veterans were visiting the country on a peace tour, scores of them greeted us warmly. Seventy-two years have passed since the bombing, but many survivors still feel unheard.

“This is one of the reasons your visit is important. We can never have another atomic bomb detonate, under any circumstances. Maybe, as veterans, your government will listen to you. We know American service members are treated with great respect in the United States,” Junji Maki, an 86-year-old survivor of the blast, told me at a cafe in Hiroshima.

“Not that well, but, if you follow U.S. sports, I can see why you'd think that,” I replied.

“We want you to take our stories back home with you. Our government does anything your government tells them to do. Our government, relative to the United States, has no real power. We feel like a colony,” another survivor and friend of Mr. Maki said. Given that the United States has as many as 50,000 troops across scores of military bases in Japan, it was hard to disagree.



Sculpture in Nagasaki notes the moment the bomb detonated.

We stopped at Nagasaki, where the United States dropped the second atomic bomb on August 9, 1945, and spoke before Hibakusha at ground zero, where you can look up into the sky and see where the bomb detonated—something nearly impossible to imagine.

A large and haunting statue of a woman, wearing a dress of roses and holding a dead child, looms over every visitor. August 9, 1945 11:02 AM—the moment the bomb detonated—is the statue's only inscription. Some clocks around Nagasaki are frozen at 11:02 a.m., regular reminders of this anniversary.

We apologized from our knees to scores of survivors at ground zero:

*Mike and I did not give
the order to drop the bombs.
We did not fight as soldiers in
the war that dropped those
bombs. However, we were
pawns of the U.S. war machine
in its latest, longest war.*

“We are doing something both our governments are too scared or ignorant to do, even 72 years after the fact. We are here to apologize to you for the dropping of the atomic bombs. There is no justification for such an act of terrorism. We are sorry.”

We looked up and saw tears in the eyes of people old enough to be our grandparents.

We gave a short talk alongside two survivors, who accepted our apology, urged worldwide nuclear disarmament, and even apologized for what the Japanese government did to the Chinese during that time. Though not our intent, our apology seemed to trigger reflections on the Japanese government's crimes as well.

Following the event, we met with members of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivors Council. One told us:

“Not many people know that Nagasaki was a majority Catholic city during that time. It was a religious community, a sanctuary city for Christians who were persecuted in a largely Buddhist country, which is why the United States was so quick to bulldoze the few standing buildings immediately after the blast. They didn't do that in Hiroshima. Most of the remaining buildings in Nagasaki were the sturdily built Catholic churches. They didn't want Westerners to see that the Americans destroyed institutions their people belonged to.”

In aerial pictures from immediately after the blast,
continued on next page ...



Peace Monument at Nagasaki.

Nagasaki

... continued from previous page

Mike and I could make out the remnants of churches. Then, Mr. Moriuchi, another survivor, handed me a postcard with an image of the severed marble head of the Virgin Mary, her eyes blown out. “Wow, horrifying,” was all I could muster, as a pit firmly lodged itself in my throat.

Ms. Fumie Kakita, only three at the time of the blast, said:

“We knew this was a different kind of bomb, but we had no idea the lasting effects it would have in our lives. My mother took us into town the day after the blast. We lived about two kilometers from the epicenter. We had been starving. It had been days since we had eaten any rice, so we went into Nagasaki to pick up vegetables and to get fresh water, having no idea the water and food was contaminated.

“My mom, she died a few years later, probably from cancer. My aunt, who was a nurse, drove from the countryside to Nagasaki to help care for the wounded. She also died within years of the blast.”

Mike and I listened solemnly, shaking our heads in disgust. I felt like I should say more, but whatever I said would have felt meaningless—possibly disrespectful—in the wake of such stories.

Mr. Moriuchi, an in-utero Hibakusha, spoke next:

“Everyone who died within the few days of the atomic blast died a horrible painful death. Although not as many people consider that all of the Hibakusha have been plagued by a lingering thought that each year might be our last as we watched many of our friends and family die over the years.

“They say as many as 5,500 Hibakushas die each year from complications due to the blast. I go in for checkup twice a year. The Hibakusha have this little blue booklet that the government gives us. We have to go in for radiation poisoning checkups twice a year. But when we are diagnosed with cancer or die early deaths, the government says, ‘We can’t prove this cancer is from the atomic blasts.’ It’s a very unjust system.”

We left the office and walked the grounds of the Peace Park to a monthly ceremony in front of an arched memorial for the American and Allied POWs who died during the blast. I asked why it existed. “Soldiers were humans too. Besides, few people talk about the Americans killed by the bomb. These stories need to be shared.”

I knew racism played a big part in the decision to drop the bombs. How could it not? These ceremonies and the many reminders Mike and I received that Nagasaki was a Catholic town reflected an understanding that Americans might pay more attention to what happened if they felt like their people were slaughtered too.

Another survivor, Mitsushige Tanaka, began to tell his story:

“I remember watching my uncle die. He hadn’t eaten in days before he finally passed away. Even then, though he hadn’t eaten, he started throwing up. I looked down and could see his intestines on the floor. And this was a full two years after the blast. Even though I was only eight years old at the time, I remember the smell of all that dead tissue. You don’t forget those kinds of things.”

It’s not just those who lived through the blast that are affected. “My daughter has a disease called microcephaly, which means she has an abnormally small head. Many of the children who were born after the blast have mental difficulties,” said Ms. Fumie Kakita, a survivor. She went on:

“And they say this was a weak bomb relative to the ones that exist today. I can only imagine the pain that would be caused by these newer bombs, whether they are dropped intentionally or accidentally. This is why the only solution must be complete nuclear disarmament. Even if we avoid a direct confrontation, it’s a miracle, with so many nuclear weapons in the world, that there haven’t been more accidents.”



Protection of Our Future, sculpture in Nagasaki Peace Park.

After the final ceremony of the day, we walked back to the hotel, exhausted. We had many more talks and ceremonies ahead of us. Each story made our apologies feel more urgent.

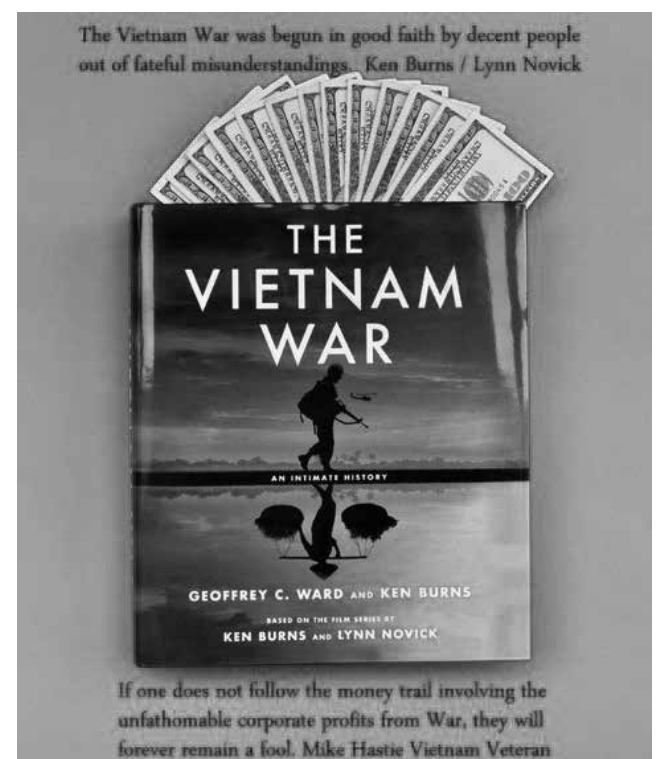
As we walked home I noticed large and powerful-looking trees lining our path. They were turning bright orange and red in the early December chill. I asked Rachel what they were. “Those are camphor trees. Despite being scorched and defoliated during the blast, somehow

they survived. They still stand in large numbers throughout Nagasaki. Aren’t they beautiful?”

Rory Fanning is a former Army Ranger. He walked across the United States for the Pat Tillman Foundation in 2008-09, following two deployments to Afghanistan with the 2nd Army Ranger Battalion. He is a housing and antiwar activist living in Chicago and the author of *Worth Fighting For: An Army Ranger’s Journey Out of the Military and Across America*.

What Is the Difference?

The American Way of Life has little Adolf Eichmanns throughout every layer of our society. What is the difference between Auschwitz and Hiroshima and Nagasaki? What is the difference between Auschwitz and the Vietnam War? When it comes to the country I was born in, the United States has become the banality of evil. In 1954, the United States detonated a hydrogen bomb in the Marshall Islands that was 1,000 times greater than Hiroshima. It spread radiation around the world. What gives the United States, which represents 5 percent of the world’s population, the right to do this? The most evil piece of real estate that has ever existed in human history is the Pentagon. Something is dreadfully wrong with the American people who would allow our government to do this. This malignant disease is woven into every fabric of our society. Adolf Eichmann was following orders. George W. Bush was following orders when our war economy decided to destroy Iraq. Adolf Nixon was following orders when our war economy was lusting for profit. Toward the end of 1968, Robert McNamara told President Johnson that the war in Vietnam was unwinnable. By then, 20,000 Americans had been killed. Johnson decided not to run for reelection. Nixon was elected president in November 1968. By the time he left office, another 38,000 Americans had been killed by our war economy. When Nixon bombed Cambodia, 500,000 people are murdered. What is the difference between Auschwitz and Cambodia? According to *60 Minutes*, when Leslie Stahl interviewed Madeleine Albright and asked her if she thought the killing of 500,000 Iraqi children was worth it, Albright said yes. What is the difference between Auschwitz and the killing of 500,000 children



in Iraq? Adolf Eichmann is alive and well, and living in the United States. The only thing that is going to stop the U.S. War Machine is great suffering. In my opinion, we are seeing it, with 41 million people living in poverty, and millions of Americans suffering from addiction. As Napoleon once said, “Do not interfere with the enemy when he is in the process of destroying himself.”

Mike Hastie
Army Medic Vietnam

The Golden Rule to Begin Epic Voyage Across the Pacific

By Helen Jaccard

This June, the *Golden Rule* and her crew will set sail on the same voyage that Albert Smith Bigelow, William Huntington, George Willoughby, and Orion Sherwood took in 1958, from California to Honolulu.

Now, as then, we sail to bring public awareness to the dangers of the nuclear era. The possibility of nuclear war is greater than ever. Michael Gorbachev, former president of the Soviet Union, wrote in *Time* magazine that a new arms race means “the nuclear threat once again seems real,” and, “it looks as if the world is preparing for war.” He called on Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin to work together to take steps to reduce the world’s nuclear arsenal.

Instead, most of the nuclear-armed nations are developing new nuclear weapons and ways to use them. The United States alone is developing four new nuclear weapons, new submarines, planes, and missiles to deliver their planet-destroying

Panese, Marshallese, and others in Hawaii were enthusiastic about the upcoming visit by the *Golden Rule*, welcoming us with open arms. We are interviewing native Hawaiians for crew positions from California to Hawaii and hope that we will have some local indigenous people as crew on our voyages around the Pacific.

Marshall Islands

The *Golden Rule* will be in the Marshall Islands on the anniversary of the 1954 Castle Bravo test that exposed the 23 crewmen of the Japanese tuna fishing boat the *Lucky Dragon 5* to radiation.

Four of Enewetak atoll’s 40 islands were completely vaporized by the U.S. nuclear bomb tests. Only three of those are considered habitable now.

Bikini atoll suffered 23 nuclear blasts, seven on the reef itself, including the Castle Bravo test. The Bravo blast yield was 2.5 times as big as predicted. The fallout went over nearby inhabited atolls of



can’t live there anymore; many are making their way to the United States.

Guam

The U.S. military has deployed three B-2 nuclear-capable stealth bombers to Andersen Air Force Base in the U.S. territory of Guam. In November, two of them were deployed right off the Korean Peninsula, further antagonizing North Korea; President Kim Jung-Un has threatened to blow up the island with a nuclear strike. Kim considers the huge U.S. military bases and continued buildups on Guam an advance base for invading the DPRK.

Okinawa

Although Okinawa is supposedly part of Japan, the United States military has occupied the islands for over 70 years, and over 26,000 U.S. military personnel are stationed there. The Okinawan people want a reduction or elimination of the military presence there. The United States is now building a huge base in one of the most precious biological places on earth, Oura Bay in Henoko, and threatening the existence of the dugongs, a beloved Okinawan sea mammal on the brink of extinction. For well over 5,000 days, there has been a sit-in demonstration against the Henoko base, and at times the crowd of protesters reaches over 6,000 people.

Both [Hawaii and Japan] are at the epicenter of potential nuclear conflicts and surrounded by nuclear-armed nations.

Japan

The *Golden Rule* will be in Japan by July of 2020. Japan owns over 46 metric tons of plutonium—enough to make over 5,000 warheads like the one that flattened Nagasaki. There is no question that Japan could enter the nuclear club quickly. And with the hawkish Abe administration and pressure from Trump for countries to take over what the United States provides for security, it is possible that Japan will be the next nation with nuclear weapons.

In a recent visit to Japan, I learned about the U.S.-Japan Nuclear Agreement that allows Japan to reprocess spent nuclear fuel and extract and stockpile plutonium. The antinuclear community ve-

hemently opposes this unique agreement, which borders on nuclear proliferation.

I gave presentations about the *Golden Rule* in nine Japanese cities, learning a lot about World War II and the impact of the Fukushima disaster.

I spoke with four Fukushima evacuees—mothers who must live away from Fukushima with their children while their husbands work in Fukushima and visit only once or twice per month. I interviewed four Hibakusha (A-bomb survivors)—about their personal stories and their life-long demand that never again shall a nuclear bomb be used. The anti-nuclear movement in Japan is strong and they have a lot to teach us—we will help their voices reach the U.S. mainland.

Golden Rule History 1958 and Now

In 1958, Albert Smith Bigelow, William Huntington, George Willoughby, and Orion Sherwood sailed the *Golden Rule* toward the Marshall Islands in an attempt to halt atmospheric nuclear weapons testing. The U.S. Coast Guard boarded her in Honolulu and arrested her crew, causing a nationwide public outcry.

Another sailboat, the *Phoenix of Hiroshima*, completed the journey and entered the atomic bomb test zone.

As a result of public awareness of the radiation dangers and demand to stop

these tests, President Kennedy signed the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty with the USSR and the UK in 1963.

The *Golden Rule* was sold after those bold actions of 1958 and sank during a gale in 2010 in northern California. Leroy Zerlang pulled her out of the water and lent his boat yard to Veterans For Peace and dozens of volunteers for her restoration.

The *Golden Rule* sails for a nuclear-free world and a peaceful, sustainable future.

For more information and to support the *Golden Rule*, visit vfpgoldenrule.org.

Helen Jaccard is a peace activist, journalist and chair of the Veterans For Peace Environmental Cost of War and Militarism Working Group.

Now, as then, we sail to bring public awareness to the dangers of the nuclear era. The possibility of nuclear war is greater than ever.

payload. China is developing new intercontinental ballistic missiles with multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles and a new submarine-launched missile. Russia has just announced that its new nuclear capabilities are unstoppable by all current defense systems.

Why the Pacific?

Foremost is the possibility of nuclear war with North Korea. But there are other concerns as well. The Pacific Islanders’ homelands have been occupied, attacked, and colonized by multiple outside groups, most recently the United States. They are pawns in the military industrial complex, at the crossroads of plans for not just perpetual war, but the unthinkable—nuclear war. The Golden Rule Project is doing what we can to stop the possibility of nuclear war—by sailing into the Pacific to put ourselves in the way of nuclear war—through education and action.

Hawaii

Hawaii is home to over 140 military facilities, including a bombing range where depleted uranium weapons have been tested. The nuclear false alarm of Jan. 13 left the population worried about what would happen if a real nuclear attack was under way, knowing that evacuation is not possible. Japan had the same thing happen on Jan. 16. Both are at the epicenter of potential nuclear conflicts and surrounded by nuclear-armed nations.

Gerry Condon, president of Veterans For Peace, recently visited Hawaii with the organizing help of Col. Ann Wright (Ret.). The Hawaiians, Guamanians, Sai

Rongelap and Utrik, and led to the evacuation of 253 people for medical care.

The Marshall Islands are still dealing with the aftermath of nuclear testing. They rely on barges from the United States to deliver poor-quality food. They cannot grow their own due to the contamination. Their rates of cancer and birth defects are astronomical.

From 1977 to 1980 111,000 cubic yards of soil scraped off from six islands in the Enewetak Atoll were mixed with concrete, placed with no lining underneath in the nuclear blast crater of the “Cactus” test of May 6, 1958, and covered with 18 inches of concrete (the Runit dome). Over 400 lumps of plutonium-239 (half-life 24,100 years) are in the dome. The locals call it “The Tomb.” This dome has weathered and is cracking. The soil around it is more contaminated than what was put into the dome. Sea water mixes with the contaminated soil from below. This was supposed to be a temporary solution. Rising seas from climate change are making the spread of radiation worse, and some of the plutonium is now measurable in China.

When the Runit dome finally deteriorates, more of its poison will empty into the sea and will likely cause negative consequences well beyond its borders.

For inhabitants of the Marshall Islands, “The Tomb” is just one of many threats they face as a result of the rising sea levels brought on by global climate change. Floodwaters threaten to overtake the islands, and unemployment is rampant. In 2016, President of the Marshall Islands, Hilda Heine, declared a state of emergency. She says that many people simply

Time Is Not on Yemen's Side

The following is adapted from a talk by Kathy Kelly on Feb. 15, 2018, given at the Stony Point Conference Center in New York.

By Kathy Kelly

In a nationally televised speech last May, Muhammad bin Salman, the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, said a prolonged war in Yemen is “in our interest.” “Time is on our side,” he said.

As the Arab Spring began to unfold in 2011 in Bahrain, it was a very courageous manifestation. Likewise in Yemen, young people risked their lives to raise grievances. Under the 33-year dictatorship of Ali Abdullah Saleh, Yemen's resources were not being shared equitably with the Yemeni people; there was an elitism and cronyism; problems that should never have been neglected became alarming.

One problem was the lowering of the water table. If you don't address that, your farmers can't grow crops, and the pastoralists can't herd their flocks, and so people were becoming desperate; and desperate people were going to the cities, and the cities were being swamped.

There were cutbacks on fuel subsidies, and this meant that people couldn't transport goods, and the economy was reeling from that. Unemployment was growing, and university students realized that there were no jobs for them, so they banded together.

The young people were remarkable, because they recognized the need to make common cause, and not just with the academics and the artists who were centered in Ta'iz, or with the very vigorous organizations in Sana'a. They reached out to the ranchers—men who never left their houses without carrying their rifle—and they persuaded them to leave the guns at home and to come out and engage in nonviolent manifestations, even after plainclothes snipers on rooftops shot and killed 50 people at a place called “Change Square” that had been set up in Sana'a.

The discipline maintained was remarkable: They organized a 200-kilometer march, walking side by side with the ranchers and the peasantry from Ta'iz to Sana'a. Some of their colleagues had been placed in terrible prisons, and they did a



A man carries an injured girl rescued from the site of a Saudi-led air strike in Sana'a, Yemen, on August 25, 2017.

lengthy fast outside the prison.

It's almost as if they had Gene Sharp's table of contents, and were going through the nonviolent methods they could use. And they were correct about the main problems Yemen was facing. They should have been included in any negotiations; people should have blessed their presence. Instead, they were ignored, and then civil war broke out, and the means that these young people tried to use became all the

And so, as Saleh went out the door after his 33-year dictatorship, he appointed Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi as his successor. Hadi is now the internationally recognized president of Yemen, but he was never elected.

At some point after Saleh stepped down, there was an attack on his compound; some of his bodyguards were wounded and killed. He himself was wounded and it took him months to re-

Iona Craig, a very respected journalist from Yemen, has said that if the [U.S.] mid-air refueling stopped, the war would end tomorrow.

more dangerous.

Go back to the history of Ali Abdullah Saleh: Because of some very skilled diplomats, because of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and because people by and large who were part of the elite didn't want to lose their power, Saleh was edged out. A very skillful diplomat named Al Ariani was one of the people who managed to get people to a negotiating table.

But these students, the Arab Spring representatives, the people representing these various grievances, were not included.

cover. He decided to make a compact with people he had formerly persecuted and fought against, who were among the group called the Houthi rebels. They were well equipped, and they marched into Sana'a, took it over. Hadi fled. He is still living in Riyadh, and that's why we talk about a “proxy war” now.

The civil war continued, but in March of 2015, Saudi Arabia decided to enter into that war and represent Hadi's governance. And when they came in, they came in with a full cache of weaponry, and under the Obama administration, they were sold four combat littoral ships (“littoral” meaning they can go along the side of a coastline). Blockades went into effect, greatly contributing to starvation, to an inability to distribute desperately needed goods.

The Saudis were sold the Patriot missile system; they were sold laser-guided missiles. And then the United States said, when the Saudi jets go up to do the bombing sorties, we will refuel them. They go over, bomb Yemen, come back into Saudi airspace, and U.S. jets go up and refuel them in midair—and then they go back and bomb some more. Iona Craig, a very respected journalist from Yemen, has said that if the mid-air refueling stopped, the war would end tomorrow.

So the Obama Administration was very

supportive. But at one point 149 people had gathered for a funeral; it was a funeral for a very well-known governor in Yemen and the double-tap was done; the Saudis first bombed the funeral, and then when people came to do rescue work, to do relief, a second bombing. And the Obama Administration said, “That's it—we can't guarantee that you're not committing war crimes when you hit these targets.” Well, by then they had already bombed four Doctors Without Borders hospitals. Keep in mind the United States had also bombed a Doctors Without Borders hospital Oct. 2, 2015 in Afghanistan.

Ban-Ki-Moon tried to tell Saudi Brigadier-General Asseri that you can't go around bombing hospitals, and the general said, “Well, we'll ask our American colleagues for better advice about targeting.”

Think about the green-lighting that Guantanamo creates, when the United Arab Emirates has a network of 18 clandestine prisons. Think about the green-lighting that our bombing of a Doctors Without Borders hospital creates, and then the Saudis do it.

We can call that a proxy war because of the involvement of nine different countries, including Sudan. How is Sudan involved? Mercenaries. Feared Janjaweed mercenaries are hired by the Saudis to fight up the coast. So when the crown prince says, “Time is on our side,” he knows that those mercenaries are taking small town after small town after small town, getting close to the vital port of Hodeidah. He knows that they have got loads of weapons and more coming, because President Trump, when he went over to dance with the princes, promised that the United States will again sell them weapons.

A little over a year ago, President Trump gave an address to both houses of Congress; he lamented the death of a Navy Seal, and the Navy Seal's widow was in the audience crying bitterly, and he shouted over the applause, “You know he'll never be forgotten; You know he's up there looking down on you.”

Well, I began to wonder, “Well, where was he killed?” And nobody ever said that Chief Petty Officer “Ryan” Owens was killed in Yemen, and that same night in a remote agricultural village of Al-Ghayil, Navy Seals suddenly realized they were in the middle of a botched operation. The neighboring tribespeople came with guns and disabled the Navy Seals' helicopter, and a gun battle broke out; the Navy Seals called in air support, and that same night, six mothers and 10 children under age 13 were among the 26 killed.

I think of American exceptionalism and we only know of one person killed—and we don't even know where he was killed, on that night.

To overcome that exceptionalism—to reach out the hand of friendship—we say that we do not believe time is on the side of any child at risk of starvation and disease, and their families, who simply want to live. Time is not on their side.

Kathy Kelly is a peace activist, pacifist, and author, and one of the founding members of Voices in the Wilderness. She is currently a co-coordinator of Voices for Creative Nonviolence.



Saudi pilots bomb Yemen with U.S.-made and U.S.-refueled aircraft.



A Bedouin sheikh walks in the unrecognized village of Wadi El Naam, southern Israel, Nov. 20, 2008. Israeli authorities were reportedly planning to destroy a mosque in the village because it was built without a permit, which Bedouins cannot obtain in their unrecognized communities. Photo: AP/Tara Todras-Whitehill

Life in the Naqab

... continued from page 1

up almost half of Palestine's entire land mass. It is shaped like a triangle, with its apex in the south toward the Bay of Aqaba, in what used to be called Um Al-Rashrash and is now the Israeli town of Eilat. The Naqab borders the Sinai Peninsula on the west and the Jordan River Valley on the east. On its northern boundary lies the Wilderness of Jerusalem, or Barriyat Al-Quds.

The Naqab and Its Bedouin History

Though called a desert, the Naqab is actually fairly fertile and allows for non-irrigated agriculture and animal husbandry. In the area of Bir-as-Saba', the largest city in the Naqab, rainfall measures between 8 to 12 inches per year. The central plateau receives 3 to 4 inches of rain per year—flash flooding is quite common in the winter and is largely the cause for the heavily dissected wadis, or watercourses.

The Palestinian Bedouin are the indigenous people of the Naqab, known to have resided there since time immemorial. For generations, the Bedouin, who existed as semi-nomadic tribes, have earned their livelihood through agriculture, raising livestock, and trading goods across the Levant. It is only fairly recently that Zionist settlements—in the form of cities, towns and farming communities exclusively for Jewish settlers—have been created in the Naqab by the State of Israel.

Over 100,000 Palestinian Bedouin lived in the Naqab prior to the establishment of Israel in 1948. As a result of the ethnic cleansing campaign and the establishment of the Zionist state, the majority of the Bedouin were forced to flee to neighboring states and only about 11,000 remained.

The Naqab Bedouin Today

According to a report prepared by Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality and submitted to the U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the 11,000 Bedouin that remained in the Naqab were moved in the 1950s and 1960s from their ancestral lands into a restricted zone called the *siyag* (closure), in the northeastern Naqab, which makes up only 10 percent of the Bedouin's land prior to 1948 and is known to be less fertile.

According to this same report, the Bedouin today have “the highest rate of infant mortality in Israel, a high incidence of respiratory diseases, and a large percentage of Bedouin children are hospitalized each year (Almi 2003).” There are not enough medical clinics to serve this population (fewer than 10 clinics serve 76,000 people). The report adds, “[I]t is important to note that this health disaster is occurring in a modern, fully developed country.”

Clearly, though, like other 1948 Palestinians, the Bedouin are now citizens of Israel, where they enjoy few citizenship rights. Their ancestral agricultural lands, particularly in the western part of the Naqab, were “Judeaized”

and transferred to new Jewish settlements.

According to Adalah, the legal center for Arab minority rights in Israel, the indigenous Palestinian Bedouin communities within the Naqab are ranked at “1” in the socioeconomic scale in Israel, 1 representing the lowest on a scale from 1 to 10. More than 65 percent of the Bedouin families live in poverty, compared to about 20 percent of all Israeli-Jewish families. Furthermore, 63 percent of the Bedouin population in the Naqab is under the age of 20. Infant mortality for the Bedouin population in 2008 was 15.0 per 1,000 live births, while it was only 2.9 per 1,000 live births among the Jewish population.

Schools are severely overcrowded and poorly equipped, and the dropout rate for Bedouin children is around 70 percent. In addition, the Bedouin community is under constant threat of home demolitions, with 1,000 homes demolished in the Naqab in the year 2011 alone.

Out of a total population of 200,000, some 95,000 Bedouin reside in 35 communities referred to as “unrecognized” towns and villages, which predate the establishment of the Zionist state. Because the communities refuse to relocate into areas determined by the State, they are denied basic services and infrastructure. This means they have no paved roads; they have no pharmacies, no medical specialists, no ambulance service, no water supply, no waste collection, no electricity, and no schools—all in a “modern, fully developed country.”

An Elections Catch-22

In addition, there is no local authority for the unrecognized communities, which means that they cannot participate in local elections. On a recent visit to the Naqab, I spoke with Attia El-Assam, the chair of the regional council of the unrecognized villages in the Naqab.

He described to me how the state of Israel deals with the regional council: The state did not recognize the traditional Bedouin leadership, claiming it did not represent the community, and so the Bedouin decide to create a democratically elected council. When they came back to



A Palestinian activist is detained by Israeli soldiers during a protest against the Prawer Plan to resettle Israel's Palestinian Bedouin minority near the Israeli settlement of Bet El, north of Ramallah, Nov. 30, 2013. Photo: AP/Majdi Mohammed

the State to discuss their issues, the government claimed that they could not be trusted because their elections may have been tainted. The council replied by suggesting that the state organize and monitor the elections. The government said it cannot do this, because the state of Israel does not recognize the existence of these communities.

It is still illegal for the Bedouin to build permanent structures in these villages, and those that do so risk heavy fines and home demolitions. When driving at night on the Naqab highways, one will recognize the “unrecognized” communities as large clusters of low buildings with no lights. In order to receive water, they must travel to water distribution points and purchase it at inflated prices.

At the same time, the government of Israel continues to financially support and provide services to over 100 Jewish-only rural towns in the region.

Trespassers on Their Own Lands

Following the 1948 war, the Israeli authorities did not recognize the Bedouins' traditional ownership rights—only a document issued by a foreign power like the Ottoman or the British was acceptable to prove land ownership. As a consequence, nearly all the lands previously held by the Negev Bedouins were nationalized to the Israeli State. This was accomplished through a series of legal procedures.

Thus the Bedouin lands became “empty”—open for Jewish settlement—and the Bedouin became trespassers on their own lands.

Beginning in 1960s, the Israeli government attempted a “comprehensive approach” to the Bedouin “problem.” The state established seven government-planned townships, which are mentioned by name in the report submitted to the United Nations. Plots of land in these urban townships were offered to Bedouin who were willing to relinquish claims to their own land. The Bedouin who were internally displaced following the establishment of the State of Israel were unable to return to their ancestral lands, and so they make up 85 percent of the population of the new townships.

Approximately 105,000 Bedouin live in these urban townships, created by the State of Israel in order to gradually eradicate—death by malnourished death, illness by untreated illness—the Bedouin population. Due to concerted efforts to decimate the Bedouin pastoral economy and expropriate Bedouin lands, the Bedouin are not permitted to cultivate their lands, and poverty, unemployment, and crime are rampant, even as segregated Jewish-only Israeli communities thrive all around them.

Not What Democracy Looks Like

Regardless of what Israel may claim about being a democracy, the Zionist attitudes and policies culminate in apartheid, racism, and colonialism. The Palestinian Bedouin community in the Naqab has been subjected to forced exile, displacement, denial of rights, denial of services, and serious deprivation of water. Because the Naqab is a largely fertile desert where agriculture and animal husbandry were practiced by indigenous Bedouin communities for centuries, from 1948 to the present, the State of Israel, in settler-colonial fashion, has been engaged in taking the land and the resources while getting rid of the indigenous communities on it.

The reality in the Naqab puts to rest the claim that the boycott of Israeli goods should only apply to West Bank settlements. Clearly the theft of land from the Palestinian Bedouin and the building of Jewish-only settlements on it cannot be considered legal and should not be legitimized in any way.

Furthermore, we must not legitimize the occupation by accepting and using the names given to localities in Palestine by the Zionist state.

Therefore the main city is Bir-as-Saba', the region is the Naqab, and the country is Palestine.

Miko Peled is an author and human rights activist born in Jerusalem. He is the author of *The General's Son*, *Journey of an Israeli in Palestine*, and *Injustice, the Story of the Holy Land Foundation Five*.

The Blockade on Israel's Heart

By Gideon Levy

What a pleasure it was again Friday, journalists and pundits competing to be the wittiest. One tweeted that the Palestinians burned Goodyear tires, another that the heads of Hamas stayed away due to their asthma. One

It's hard to understand how one can look at tens of thousands of people in their cage and not see them. How is it possible to look at these protesters and not see the disaster wrought first and foremost by Israel?

referenced the “supertanker” fire-fighting plane Israel called in to battle nationwide fires in 2016. Someone posted a photo of a protester with a swastika, writing: “charming people to make peace with.” A “moderate” commentator said on television that this was a “foolish protest,” beneath his famous intellect. They all, as is their wont, praised the army on its accomplishment: No one crossed the border. The state has been saved from annihilation. Way to go, Israel Defense Forces.

As the witticisms and back-patting made the rounds of social media, 20,000 desperate Gazans were running around in the sand near the fence that imprisons them, crying out for help. Wearing rags, mostly young men, some 65 percent of whom are unemployed, breathing in the black smoke from the tires and knowing that their past, their present, and their future are blacker. Some were holding the latest product of Gaza's arms industry: mirrors. Bedroom mirrors and bathroom mirrors, meant to blind the sharpshooters. Such amusing sights have not been seen here for a long time: 1,350 people were wounded, 293 of them from live gunfire; of those, 20 are in serious to critical condition. Nine bodies as of Saturday morning.

Most were careful not to cross the death line, exactly the way it was in East Germany. The East Germans shot anyone who tried to leave the country, and it was shock-



Yasser Murtaja, before the Gaza border protests. Photo: FB/Ain Media

ing; the Israelis shoot at anyone approaching their fence, and it's amusing. Soon there might be an electric fence, which will make the army snipers superfluous.

Among those killed was Hussein Mohammed Madi, a 16-year-old boy, and a news photographer who was wearing a bullet-resistant vest marked “press” in English, which did not protect him at all from the moral-army sharpshooter who aimed for his chest. Perhaps the sharpshooter couldn't read English. Yasser Murtaja was 30 and had never been out of the Gaza Strip. He recently posted a photograph showing a bird's-eye view of the Strip. Murtaja wrote that his dream was to take such a picture. Now, perhaps his dream will come true from the heavens. At his funeral Saturday, his body was covered with his blue journalist's vest. He wasn't the only journalist shot by army snipers Friday. Six more were wounded. Their blood is no redder than anyone else's,

but the fact that they were shot proves the army snipers fire indiscriminately and are not choosy about their victims.

And all this led to clever comments on social media and compliments for the army in the press. It's hard to understand how one can look at tens of thousands of people in their cage and not see them. How is it possible to look at these protesters and not see the disaster wrought first and foremost by Israel. How can we absolve ourselves, putting everything on Hamas and not be shocked for a moment at the sight of the blood of innocents shed by IDF soldiers. How can a former Shin Bet security service chief instigate a growing protest here over an empty speech by the prime minister at an equally empty ceremony, while this massacre rouses barely a hiccup?

This time there are no Qassam rockets, no knives, not even scissors. There's no terror except “tire terror” and the “terror march,” as the daily *Israel Hayom* grotesquely put it. This time the protest is not violent.

Israel doesn't see this either. It doesn't see the whites of the protesters' eyes, it doesn't see them as human beings, it doesn't see their despair; it doesn't see the bitter-

Israel doesn't see this either. It doesn't see the whites of the protesters' eyes, it doesn't see them as human beings, it doesn't see their despair.

ness of their fate. When the next natural disaster happens somewhere, Israel will once again send an aid team and everyone will laud Israel's “Jewish” compassion and its humanity. But no one can deny the hardheartedness that has befallen it, so hard that it blocks humanity and compassion from reaching the heart, which has been scarred and blocked permanently.

Gideon Levy is an Israeli journalist and author. He writes opinion pieces and a weekly column for the newspaper Haaretz. He has won prizes for his articles on human rights in the Israeli-occupied territories.



Mortally wounded Palestinian journalist Yasser Murtaja, 31, is evacuated during clashes with Israeli troops at the Israel-Gaza border, in the southern Gaza Strip, April 6, 2018. Photo: Ibraheem Abu Mustafa/Reuters

Resisting U.S. Military Bases in Latin America

The anti-bases movement in Latin America is strong and a manifestation of the people's will

By James Patrick Jordan

“The United States appear to be destined by Providence to plague America with misery in the name of liberty.” Those words were written by Simón Bolívar, 189 years ago. The Great Liberator understood that liberation and the U.S. concept of liberty are not the same. When imperialists talk about liberty, they mean access to land, water, and other natural resources for private development and profit.

Ana Esther Ceceña, in a piece published by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Defense in 2013, says the United States has

These bases not only threaten Latin America and especially Venezuela, Cuba, Bolivia, and the ALBA countries that form a bulwark against U.S. interventionism. They threaten the world.

“two general objectives: to guarantee the maintenance of capitalism and within it, the primacy of the United States; and to guarantee the availability of all the riches of the world as the material base for the functioning of the system, assuring that its hierarchies and dynamics of power are maintained.”

Six years before Bolívar penned his prescient words, the Monroe Doctrine said to European governments that any attempt to interfere in Latin America would be deemed “dangerous to our peace and safety ... we could not view any interposition ... by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States.”

By emphasizing this interference as “an unfriendly disposition toward the United States,” the Monroe Doctrine portrayed Latin American independence within a context of U.S. interests and influence. Since the establishment of the Monroe Doctrine, U.S. history in Latin America has been marked by invasions and occupations and proxy wars and outright theft of land such as occurred in the War against Mexico. This has made it difficult for the United States to establish full-on military bases in Latin America. The Mexican public especially maintains an aversion to U.S. military presence within its borders. Unfortunately, the country's oligarchy ignores this aversion and betrays the people's national pride.

Nevertheless, the United States has been successful in establishing bases in several countries throughout Latin America, with formally recognized bases in El

Salvador, occupied Cuba, Aruba, Curaçao, Antigua and Barbuda, Andros Island in the Bahamas, Puerto Rico, and even a micro-base, or “Lily Pad” in Costa Rica that the Costa Rican government officially denies.

However, until recently, the momentum had been against U.S. bases. Starting in 1999, when the United States lost the Howard Air Base in Panama, the number of U.S. bases had steadily declined. In 2008 the Colombian government had agreed to grant U.S. access to seven bases, but this was struck down by the constitutional court in 2010. The reality is that the United States continues to access and use these bases based on other agreements. The court decision was against a permanent foreign presence, but “permanency” is a somewhat amorphous concept open to interpretation. It is safe to say that U.S. access to these bases is relatively un-

fettered and continuous. In 2008 the government of Ecuador booted the United States from its Manta base. Ernesto Samper, head of Unasur (the Union of South American Nations) said that U.S. military bases should “leave the continent.”

Now the pendulum is swinging the other way, which is one reason we need this anti-bases movement. The coup in Honduras in 2009 occurred shortly after the elected president Manuel Zelaya had proposed converting the Palmerola (or Soto Cano) Air Force Base into a civilian airport. The United States and Honduras had both used the base since the 1980s, when it was an important component of the contra war against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Since the coup, the United States has undertaken new construction on the base and increased the number of troops. Today there are more than 1,300 U.S. military and civilian employees, dwarfing the population of 300 persons at the Honduran Air Force Academy. Also since the coup, the U.S. military has built a base at Catarasca in Honduras' Mosquitia region, and in Guanaja, the U.S. Navy has built a facility for the Honduran Navy that hosts both U.S. and Honduran aircraft.

And that is just Honduras. At the end of 2016, Peru's regional government in Amazonas approved a partnership with the U.S. military's Southern Command and Pentagon contractors to build a new base in that country. With the legislative coup against the government of Dilma Rousseff in Brazil and the right-wing electoral victory in Argentina, both those countries



U.S. soldiers perform an equipment inspection on Colombian paratroopers in 2015.

are growing closer to the U.S. military, showing an openness to new U.S. military bases. Brazilian President Michel Temer has invited the United States to use the Alcantara missile and rocket-launching base. Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães, Brazil's former general secretary of Foreign Affairs and minister of Strategic Affairs, writes that “The Americans' main objective is to have a military base in Brazilian territory with which it can exercise its sovereignty outside the laws of the Brazilian authorities. ... The location of Alcantara in the Brazilian northeast facing West Africa is ideal for the United States for its political and military operations in South America and Africa.” In Argentina, neoliberal President Mauricio Macri reached an agreement with the United States in May 2016, to let the United States build two bases, one in Tierra del Fuego and the other, the Guaraní base, on the triple border of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, in the area of the world's largest reservoir of drinkable, fresh water.

Speaking of water and natural resources, if we look at how the bases and military activities and presences are spread throughout Latin America, we can see that they are located in and around concentrations of mineral and oil deposits, big agribusiness centers, and large reservoirs of water.

Despite these setbacks, the anti-bases

Many individual national coalitions—Okinawa, Italy, Jeju Island Korea, Diego Garcia, Cyprus, Greece, and Germany—are demanding closure of bases on their territory.

movement in Latin America is strong. These bases not only threaten Latin America and especially Venezuela, Cuba, Bolivia, and the ALBA (Bolivarian trade alliance) countries that form a bulwark against U.S. interventionism. They threaten the world. From the Palenquero base in Colombia—one of the seven Colombia bases where the United States is constantly but not “permanently” present—jets can reach any country in Latin America, as well as Africa and the Middle East, with just one refueling stop or less.

The presence of U.S. military bases is only one component of the infrastructure of Empire. We know that U.S. military in-

vasions, occupations, base constructions, and accords are almost always followed by the passage of laws undermining traditional farming, the diversion of water resources, the exploitation of mineral and oil wealth, the militarization of police and borders, and the construction of and redesign of penitentiary systems on a U.S. mass-incarceration model.

In terms of U.S. military activities in Latin America, the issue of the bases is really the tip of the iceberg. We must also consider the reactivation of the 4th Fleet in the Caribbean; the rapid increase in joint military exercises throughout the hemisphere, which often result in the deployment of temporary, and therefore mobile, bases; and the constant flow of military advisors.

Ana Ceceña writes about how the Pentagon's global command system guarantees “a more detailed supervision of the lands, seas, glaciers, and populations that make up the Earth in its entirety.”

These “Commands” represent only one aspect of this phenomenon. As is so often the case, Colombia is the testing ground for this puppet sovereignty. In 2012, the United States and Colombia signed an agreement of military cooperation that has had Colombia undertaking joint patrols with the United States in Central America and West Africa. The United States has promoted a partnership be-

tween NATO and Colombia. Colombia has become heavily involved in the training of military, police, court, and prison personnel around the world. Over the last decade, Colombia has trained well over 25,000 persons in other countries. Half have been in Mexico, with the other leading recipients being Honduras, Guatemala, and Panama. It must be added that when we speak of “puppet sovereignty,” this is not meant to imply that the Colombian military personnel are less capable or less professional than their U.S. military colleagues. Clearly, Colombian military personnel are quite educated and experi-

continued on next page ...

Coalition Against U.S. Foreign Military Bases Unity Statement

We, the undersigned peace, justice and environmental organizations, and individuals, endorse the following Points of Unity and commit ourselves to working together by forming a Coalition Against U.S. Foreign Military Bases, with the goal of raising public awareness and organizing non-violent mass resistance against U.S. foreign military bases.

While we may have our differences on other issues, we all agree that U.S. foreign military bases are the principal instruments of imperial global domination and environmental damage through wars of aggression and occupation, and that the closure of U.S. foreign military bases is one of the first necessary steps toward a just, peaceful and sustainable world. Our belief in the urgency of this necessary step is based on the following facts:

1. While we are opposed to all foreign military bases, we do recognize that the United States maintains the highest number of military bases outside its territory, estimated at almost 1000 (95 percent of all foreign military bases in the world). Presently, there are U.S. military bases in every Persian Gulf country except Iran.
2. In addition, United States has 19 Naval air carriers (and 15 more planned), each as part of a Carrier Strike Group, composed of roughly 7,500 personnel, and a carrier air wing of 65 to 70 aircraft—each of which can be considered a floating military base.
3. These bases are centers of aggressive military actions, threats of political and economic expansion, sabotage and espionage, and crimes against local populations. In addition, these military

bases are the largest users of fossil fuel in the world, heavily contributing to environmental degradation.

4. The annual cost of these bases to the American taxpayers is approximately \$156 billion. The support of U.S. foreign military bases drains funds that

can be used to fund human needs and enable our cities and States to provide necessary services for the people.

5. This has made the U.S. a more militarized society and has led to increased tensions between the U.S. and the rest of the world. Stationed throughout the

world, almost 1000 in number, U.S. foreign military bases are symbols of the ability of the United States to intrude in the lives of sovereign nations and peoples.

6. Many individual national coalitions—for example, Okinawa, Italy, Jeju Island Korea, Diego Garcia, Cyprus, Greece, and Germany—are demanding closure of bases on their territory. The base that the U.S. has illegally occupied the longest, for over a century, is Guantánamo Bay, whose existence constitutes an imposition of the empire and a violation of International Law. Since 1959 the government and people of Cuba have demanded that the government of the U.S. return the Guantánamo territory to Cuba.

U.S. foreign military bases are NOT in defense of U.S. national, or global security. They are the military expression of U.S. intrusion in the lives of sovereign countries on behalf of the dominant financial, political, and military interests of the ruling elite. Whether invited in or not by domestic interests that have agreed to be junior partners, no country, no peoples, no government, can claim to be able to make decisions totally in the interest of their people, with foreign troops on their soil representing interests antagonistic to the national purpose.

We must all unite to actively oppose the existence of U.S. foreign military bases and call for their immediate closure. We invite all forces of peace, social and environmental justice to join us in our renewed effort to achieve this shared goal.

For more information, visit the website at noforeignbases.org.



Police from the Japanese mainland carry an Okinawan protester away from the site of construction of a new U.S. base at Henoko. Photo: Ellen Davidson

Latin America

... continued from previous page

enced in their craft and equal to their U.S. counterparts. In fact, the United States has spent billions of dollars in tax monies precisely to ensure the development of the Colombian military as a highly effective stand-in.

Gen. John Kelly is President Donald Trump's current chief of staff and was formerly head of Homeland Security. Before that, he was the commander of Southcom. Testifying before the U.S. Congress on April 29, 2014, Kelly made a startlingly honest and revealing statement: "The beauty of having a Colombia—they're such good partners, particularly in the military realm.... When we ask them to go somewhere else and train the Mexicans, the Hondurans, the Guatemalans, the Panamanians, they will do it almost without asking. And they'll do it on their own... That's why it's important for them to go because I'm—at least on the military side—restricted from working with some of these countries because of limitations that are, that are really based on past sins. And I'll let it go at that."

The U.S.-Colombia relationship has been so successful, it has become a model for U.S. relations with Mexico. This includes the development of Plan Mexico and the North American Alliance for Security and Prosperity, a military accord that binds Canada and Mexico more closely to the Pentagon.

The Mexican military has a history of nonintervention internationally. But at a conference in October 2016, Re-

becca Chavez, deputy secretary of Defense for Western Hemisphere Affairs during the Obama administration and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, revealed that "Both the United States and Mexico ... have taken steps that have resulted in a transformation of the strategic relationship." Chavez explained that Mexico as the 15th largest economy in the world, has a growing role in world affairs, including the military sphere. She noted that Mexico has expanded its military mission with attaches in Indonesia, Iran, Egypt, South Africa, and several other countries and that it participated in peacekeeping missions in Haiti and Lebanon. Chavez cites

'The beauty of having a Colombia ... When we ask them to go somewhere else and train the Mexicans, the Hondurans, the Guatemalans, the Panamanians, they will do it almost without asking.'

—Gen. John Kelly

Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto for reevaluating the role of the Mexican military, saying, "Even before the shift, Mexico engaged in approximately 40 external

activities to support around 25 different partners.... Our first step has been to expand the dialogue and relationship from just a narrow internal security focus... Other potential areas of cooperation are Central America and working together to strengthen the Inter-American Defense System."

It is a very good idea for us to participate in the global movement against foreign U.S. and NATO military bases. But any victories we win will be short-lived if we don't connect to the larger movement against imperialism. The designs of the Pentagon are adaptable. Military agreements, joint exercises, and coordinated commands are among the ways to augment and even replace the expansion of foreign bases.

Ultimately, our struggle against foreign bases must be part of an even larger and overarching struggle, the struggle for liberation from Empire. In the final analysis, the only answer is to shake off the yoke of U.S./capitalist domination and put something better in its place, with participatory democracy and socialism.

Whenever we raise the cry of "No More Bases!" then let us follow that cry with a shout of solidarity with Venezuela, solidarity with Cuba, solidarity with Bolivia, solidarity with the people of Puerto Rico and every occupied territory—solidarity with every popular movement and government that stands in the way of the forward march of Empire until that Empire is utterly and completely dismantled.

James Patrick Jordan is the national co-coordinator, Alliance for Global Justice and a member of the People's Human Rights Observatory-PHRO. This article was given as a presentation at the Conference on U.S. Foreign Military Bases in Baltimore in January 2018.

When They Call You a Terrorist

Black Lives Matter co-founder Patrisse Khan-Cullors on her path to activism and being criminalized at age 12.

By Patrisse Khan-Cullors and asha bandele

The first time I am arrested, I am 12 years old.

One sentence and I am back there, all that little girl fear and humiliation forever settled in me at the cellular level. It's the break between seventh and eighth grades, and for the first time I have to attend summer school because of my math and science grades and I am angry about it. No other Millikan kids come here, to this school in Van Nuys, for remediation, only me. The summer school I attend is for the kids who live in my neighborhood. It doesn't have a campus, but it has metal detectors and police. There are no police or metal detectors at Millikan. Somehow, mentally, I don't make the adjustment. I still think of myself as a student there, which I am, but not for these summer months, and one day I do what I'd learned from my Millikan peers to do to cope: I smoke some weed. At Millikan it is a daily occurrence for kids to show up to class high, to light up in the bathroom, to smoke on the campus lawn. No one gets in trouble. Nowhere is there police. Millikan is the middle school where the gifted kids go.

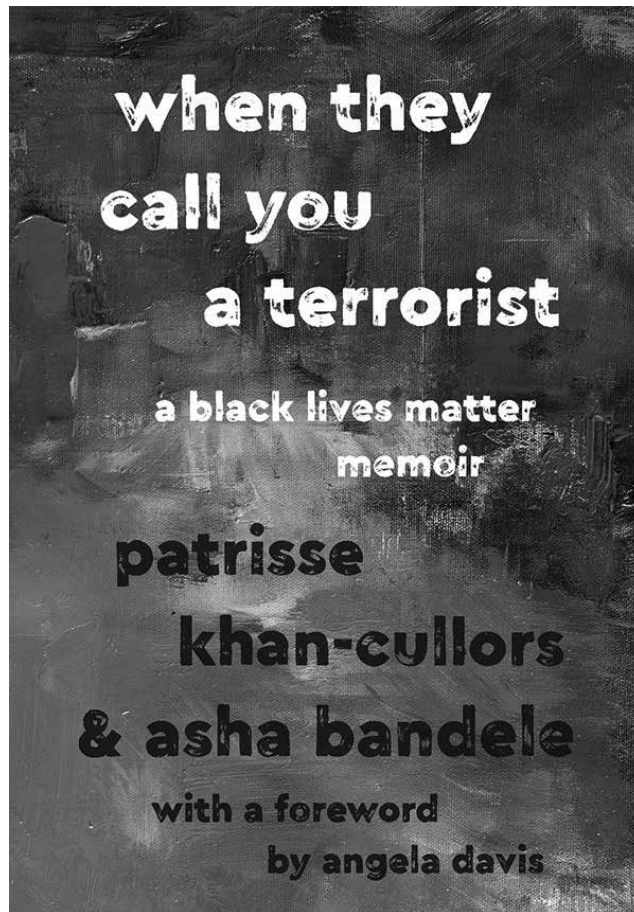
But in my neighborhood school things are totally different, and someone must have said something about me and my weed—two girls had come into the bathroom when I'd been in there—because two days later a police officer comes to my class. I remember my stomach dropping the way it does on one of those monster roller-coaster rides at Six Flags. I can just feel that they are coming for me and I am right. The cop tells me to come to the front of the room, where he handcuffs me in front of everyone and takes me to the dean's office, where my bag is searched, where I am searched, pockets turned out, shoes checked, just like my brothers in the alleyway when I was nine years old. I have no weed on me but I am made to call my mother at work and tell her what happened, which I do through tears. I didn't do it, Mommy, I lie through genuine tears of fear. My mother believes me. I am the good girl, and she takes my side.

Later, when we are home together, she will not ask me how I am feeling or get righteously angry. She will not rub my wrists where the handcuffs pinched them or hold me or tell me she loves me. This is not a judgment of her. My mother is a manager, figuring out how to get herself and her four children through the day alive. That this has happened, but that she and her kids are all at home and, relatively speaking, safe, is a victory for my mother. It is enough. And for all of my childhood, this is just the way it is.

What made middle school such a culture shock, beyond the race and class differences, was that all throughout elementary school I was considered bright, gifted even, a star student whom my fourth-grade teacher, Ms. Goldberg, indulged when I asked if I could teach the class about the civil rights movement. A week before she had given me a book, *The Gold Cadillac* by Mildred Taylor, about a girl making the frightening drive with her father from Ohio through the Jim Crow South, down to Mississippi, where her extended family lives.

The terror in it was palpable for me, the growing sense on every page that they might be killed; by the time I was nine, police had already raided our small apartment in search of one of my favorite uncles, my father Alton's brother. My uncle who used and sold drugs, and who had a big laugh and who used to hug me up and tell me I was brilliant, but who did not with live us, whose whereabouts we did not know the day the police in full riot gear burst in.

Even tiny Jasmine, probably five years old during that raid, was yelled at and told to sit on the couch with me as police tore through our home in a way I would never later



see on *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*, where Olivia Benson is always gentle with the kids. In real life, when I was a little kid, when my brothers and sisters were, we were treated like suspects. We had to make our own gentle, Jasmine and I, holding each other, frozen like I was the day of the alleyway incident, this time cops tearing through our rooms instead of the bodies of my brothers.

They even tore through our drawers. Did they think my uncle was hiding in the dresser drawer?

But as with the incident with my brothers, we did not speak of it once it was over.

I am sure this incident is at least partially why *The Gold Cadillac* was a story I clung to so deeply, why I remember it now, decades on. While the details wove together differently, the fear drawn out across those pages is the same, is my own. Finishing it, I wanted more. I wanted confirmation that that which we did not speak of was real. Which was why I asked, Please, Ms. Goldberg, may I have more books to read?

Of course, she said, and gave me stories I devoured, child-sized bites of the fight for freedom and justice.

Please, I went back and asked Ms. Goldberg, can I teach the class about the books?

Yes, she said, Why not? Because that's how she was. Ms. Goldberg, with her '80s feathered brown hair and her Flashdance-style workout gear she wore to school every day.

I had a reward—pieces of candy—for my classmates who answered the questions I posed during the 15-minute presentations I was allowed to give on the books I read. I wanted them to know our history in this nation, what it was we come from. I wanted them to learn, as I had learned, the terror we knew. Somehow it connected to a terror I—we—felt in our own neighborhoods, in our own current lives, but could not quite name.

But between Ms. Goldberg and then Ms. Bilal—the afterschool teacher and the single dark-skinned Black woman I would have during my early education, who brought us Kwanzaa and Afrocentricity—I turned toward middle school hopeful, even if it was in a community I didn't know, a community without my community. I expected to still be loved, encouraged.

Millikan Middle School is sufficiently far away from my home that I need a ride each morning in order to get to school on time. Before, I could simply hop on the city bus with all the other kids from my hood, but getting into Sherman Oaks is a more complicated endeavor. The problem is that my family does not own a car, which is

why our neighbor Cynthia steps in to help. My mother borrows her car to ensure my safe passage. This is not quite as straightforward as it may sound.

Cynthia, no more than 19, a young mother who has on and off been involved with my brother Monte and who will eventually have a child, my nephew Chase, with him, had been shot a year before in a drive-by while she was at a party. From the waist down, she was left paralyzed. But she has a car she loans my mother, a beat-up, champagne-colored station wagon. The back windows are gone, replaced by plastic lining, and the whole thing smells like pee because with Cynthia being mostly paralyzed, she loses control of her bladder.

My mother takes me to Millikan in that car, which initially I deal with because, a car! But after the first day, I realize quickly I have to make a change. Day two and I say, Drop me off here, Mommy, meaning a few blocks away from the school. The car we are in does not look like any of the other cars that pull up to Millikan, all gleaming and new in the morning sun. Kids pour out of those vehicles, Mercedes and Lexuses, and run from waving parents onto the campus's greener-than-green lawn, as all at once I become familiar with a sudden and new feeling taking root in my spirit: a shame that goes deep, that is encompassing and defining. I realize we are poor.

Later, as an adult, a friend will say to me, Of course you felt that. Oppression is embarrassing, she will say quietly. But in middle school, segregated as it is, between Black and white kids, wealthy and poor kids, I don't quite know what to do with this feeling or the terrible question that encircles my 12-year-old soul: Am I supposed to be embarrassed about the people who nurtured me, who gave me to the world and gave the world to me?

I don't fit in with the white kids who smoke weed in between classes in bathrooms or on the campus lawn. I don't fit in with the few Black girls who want to be Janet Jackson or Whitney Houston when they grow up. I wear MC Hammer pants, crotch swinging low. I wear my own brand of Blackness informed as it also is by the Mexicanness of the neighborhood I was raised in. People say I am weird, but I don't feel weird. I only feel like myself: a girl from Van Nuys who loves poetry and reading and, more than anything, dancing. I am in the dance department and my dances are equal parts African, Hip Hop and Mariachi, which is also to say, weird.

*All at once I become familiar
with a sudden and new feeling
taking root in my spirit: a
shame that goes deep, that is
encompassing and defining. I
realize we are poor.*

Middle school is the first time in my life when I feel unsure of myself. No one is calling me gifted anymore. No one, save for my dance teacher, encourages me or seems to have patience with me. It's in middle school that my grades drop for the first time and that I come to believe that maybe all that love I'd gotten in elementary school had somehow dried up, my ration run dry. At the age of 12 I am on my own, no longer in the world as a child, as a small human, innocent and in need of support. I saw it happen to my brothers and now it was happening to me, this moment when we become the thing that's no longer adorable or cherished. The year we become a thing to be discarded.

For my brothers, and especially for Monte, learning that they did not matter, that they were expendable, began in the streets, began while they were hanging out with friends, began while they were literally breathing while Black. The extraordinary presence of police in our communities, a result of a drug war aimed at us,

continued on next page ...

Visit to WWI

... continued from page 24

“My Dear Parents, I have been sentenced to death. Today, September 11th, 1917. Only myself and another comrade (Seaman Reichpietsch); the others have been left off 15 years imprisonment. You have heard why this has happened to me. I am a sacrifice of the longing for peace, others are going to follow. I cannot stop it now. It is six o'clock in the morning, I am being taken to Cologne at 6:30, and on Wednesday September 12th at 9 o'clock in the morning, I am going to be sacrificed to military justice. I would have liked to press your hands once more to say goodbye, but I will do it silently. Console Paula and my little Fritz. I don't like dying so young, but I die with a curse on the German-militarist state. These are my last words. I hope that someday you and mother will be able to read them. Always, your son, Albin Kobes.”

I have a personal connection to WWI. My wife Jill's grandfather was shot in the foot when he was fighting in France during the war. It was a wound that never healed and prevented him from getting a job once he got back. His official cause of death was listed as falling down the basement stairs. His surviving wife was the strongest woman I have ever meet. Every time Jill and I would visit, it seemed that her mission was to make sure I always had my favorite beer in hand. It wasn't until we found out the truth of his death that I fully understood why she was obsessed with making sure I was never in need of drink or food. After Jill's father and grandmother died, only Jill's aunt knew the truth. On her deathbed she revealed to Jill how this WWI wounded veteran had died. He had been going into the early version of the VA to get needed medical treat-

ment. On his last visit a new young doctor told him that the government had instituted a new rule that prohibited medical treatment of any self-inflicted wound and required the reimbursement of past treatment. He went home and told his young wife what the doctor had said. When she left the house with their two little kids, he went down to the basement and hanged himself. He could not face being a financial burden on his young family. Jill's grandmother removed and hid the rope before she called the police. In essence the U.S. government executed him.

The Memory Hall contained the exhibition “Posters as Munitions.” Almost all the posters gave one a sense of the high level of shared sacrifice. The best poster that showed all were expected to contribute to the war effort was the one of a two-year-old saluting with the following message: “Little Americans. Do your bit. Eat oat-meal-cornmeal mush-hominy-other corn cereals-and rice with milk. Save the wheat for our soldiers. Leave nothing on your plate. United States Food Administration.”

The artwork in the Wylie Gallery depicting refugees and the cost of war for civilians was quite moving. The charcoal drawings of French soldier and artist Lucien Jonas were stunning and revealed the humanity expressed by many in horrific conditions. Jonas's “The Ring” illustrates a form of humanity by soldiers that has been lost and not exhibited in recent wars. In the scene a young “dough-boy” places an engagement ring on the finger of a young French woman. An estimated 100,000 American soldiers and sailors married French women. I myself also placed a ring on a young woman when I was at war and with the help of my congressman, Tom Railsback, was able to marry her. If we send our young to other countries for supposedly humanitarian reasons, it should follow that a fair



number will fall in love and marry. That mixing of cultures is good in my view. My particular marriage only lasted a few years, but it was educational for many in my rural community here in Illinois. I discussed this at length with Sen. Tammy Duckworth, who is an excellent example of the benefits of not treating those foreign citizens as “others.” Tammy's father had experiences similar to mine and also placed a ring on a young woman when deployed. Tammy jokingly told me: “I am what happens when you send a soldier to war and he falls in love.”

Unlike today, there was lots of debate about going to war that was also exhibited at the museum. The following are a few comments that stood out for me: W.E.B. DuBois organized the silent parade in Harlem with 10,000 participants to remind President Wilson that “all Americans were, to use his words, fighting to make America and the world safe

for democracy.” “War babies” was the Wall Street term for corporations that became suddenly fat from the war. Minnesota Rep. Ernest Lundeen said, “If you conscript men for war, conscript wealth for war.” Sen. Norris said, “We are going into war upon the command of gold. I feel we are about to put the dollar sign on the American flag.”

I stopped at the museum store and picked up a WWI-related DVD of *Johnny Got His Gun* when I left. Roger Ebert called it one of the greatest antiwar films of all time. To paraphrase Ebert, I pleasantly found the museum's current exhibits to be one of the greatest antiwar presentations of all time.

For more information visit the website at theworldwar.org.

Paul Appell is an Army veteran of the Vietnam War, a peace activist, an independent farmer, and a member of Veterans For Peace.

Terrorist

... continued from previous page

despite our never using or selling drugs more than unpoliced white children, ensured that we all knew this. For us, law enforcement had nothing to do with protecting and serving, but controlling and containing the movement of children who had been labeled super-predators simply by virtue of who they were born to and where they were born, not because they were actually doing anything predatory.

I learned I didn't matter from the very same place that lifted me up, the place I'd found my center and voice: school. And it will not be until I am an adult, determined to achieve a degree in religion, part of a long and dedicated process I undertook to become an ordained minister, that I will enjoy school again.

A few years after I complete my degree, Dr. Monique W. Morris published her groundbreaking book, *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*, demonstrating how Black girls are rendered disposable in schools, unwanted, unloved. Twelve percent of us receive at least one suspension during our school careers

while our white (girl) counterparts are suspended at a rate of 2 percent. In Wisconsin the rate is actually 21 percent for Black girls but 2 percent for white girls.

But having attended schools with both Black and white girls, one thing I learned quickly is that while we can behave in the same or very similar ways, we are al-

That was the year that I learned that being Black and poor defined me more than being bright and hopeful and ready.

most never punished similarly. In fact, in white schools, I witnessed an extraordinary amount of drug use compared to what my friends in my neighborhood schools experienced. And yet my friends were the ones policed. My neighborhood friends went to schools where no mass or even singular shootings occurred, but where police in full Kevlar patrolled the hallways, often with drug-sniffing dogs, the very same kind that they turned on children in the South who demanded an end to segregation.

By the time Black Lives Matter is born, we not only know that we have been ren-

dered disposable because of our lived experience—which few listened to—but also from data and finally from those terrible, viral images of Black girls being thrown brutally out of their seats by people who are called School Safety Officers, for the crime of having their phones out in the classroom. Monique Morris' report-

agement as students seem to matter less than how we can be proven to be criminals, people to be arrested.

Twelve, and childhood already gone. Twelve, and being who we are can cost us our lives.

It cost Tamir Rice his life.

He was a child of 12. And the cop who shot him took under two seconds, literally, to determine that Tamir should die.

Tamir Rice. Twelve.

Twelve, and out of time.

Excerpted from When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir by Patrisse Khan-Cullors and asha bandele.

Patrisse Khan-Cullors is an artist, organizer, and freedom fighter from Los Angeles. A co-founder of Black Lives Matter, she is also a performance artist, Fulbright scholar, popular public speaker and an NAACP History Maker.

asha bandele, author of the best-selling award-winning memoir The Prisoner's Wife and four other works, has been honored for her work in journalism, fiction, poetry, and activism. A mother and a former senior editor at Essence magazine, asha serves as a senior director at the Drug Policy Alliance.

ing will tell us about the 12-year-old girl from Detroit who is threatened with both expulsion and criminal charges for writing the word “Hi” on her locker door; and the one in Orlando who is also threatened with expulsion from her private school if she doesn't stop wearing her hair natural.

Twelve.

And for me, too, it started the year I turned 12. That was the year that I learned that being Black and poor defined me more than being bright and hopeful and ready. I had been so ready to learn. So willing.

Twelve, the moment our grades and en-

Don't Count These Girls Out

By Denny Riley

Saturday morning and I'm up early to go watch the girls' basketball team James coaches. Their record is 2–1 in a five-game season. They play in the gym behind the school where James works. He's a restorative justice counselor at Roots Middle School in a hard part of Oakland.

It's a cold and hazy morning. I park in the asphalt lot by the two-story beige school building at International and 61st. There are modular classrooms too, and a couple buildings I never really look at, and the gymnasium, and asphalt all around. Big colorful murals adorn the sides of the buildings, murals meant to empower the students, with quotes from Martin Luther King, Fredrick Douglass, and Colin Kaepernick. Tall chain-link fences, twice as tall as you imagine, separate the buildings. They divide the school's grounds into squared-off zones, like kennels for kids, or confinement camps. A few fences have open gates. I go through one and head toward the gym doors. James comes striding out with a big smile. One of his girls told him she saw me coming. We hug and blah blah blah, and I follow him in. His team is doing warm-up drills. It's as cold as a meat locker in here. James gives me his jacket. He laughs when I say he might need it, says he'll be plenty warm.

I climb into the bleachers and stand watching his team do drills, same drills every basketball team does. A girl from one line dribbles to the hoop for a layup, a girl from the other line gets the rebound and bounces it to the next girl. Simple, unless you're an 11-year-old who's never before played basketball. Then it goes like what's going on before me, with no real definition of the two lines, with girls forgetting to get the rebound, with girls getting their own rebound and shooting a second time, with girls talking with the girl behind them in line. James looks comfortable coaching the girls, looks like he believes their unorganized approach needs only a tweak, a word or two, and it will be fine. He leads them in stretching exercises. He gets down on the hardwood and does the exercises with the girls. He counts the reps in his big voice.

After last week's game I told James, "They look like really nice girls. I bet they like you."

He said, "Ahh ..." as though he didn't know where to start, and proceeded to tell me about school days and

girls fighting with other girls, even fighting with boys, and girls refusing to go to class or going to class and cussing out the teacher and storming out, or one girl who sometimes stands in the hall punching her locker. And their home lives aren't so good, like a mom and a grandmother and a 20-year-old son with his girlfriend and a teenage daughter and James's basketball player all living in a three bedroom apartment in the projects. It's all projects around Roots, except across International where it's all slums. One of the girls doesn't wear her glasses to the games because she shares them with her mom and they only have the one pair and can't have them broken. For one girl there's just her and her mom at home since her father and then her brother were shot dead.

I decide I should be watching the other team warm up, another group of colored girls of varying hue and size. They don't look so good, not as organized as the Roots

The Roots girls are more aggressive. They fight for the ball. They fight for the ball the way I've never seen it fought for in a basketball game.

team, except one girl who has real skill. At least it seems to me. While the coach, a shaved-head white woman, talks to them the way a coach is supposed to, this girl has a ball spinning in her palm like a Globetrotter. When the game begins she nonchalantly has her way with the hoop. She looks calm and moves between everyone else easily, none of the squealing of the others, none of the jerky unexpected moves. The game is two 16-minute halves. At halftime James's team is losing 15–4.

The Roots girls sulk as they walk off to hear their coach's halftime talk. They look defeated. James looks upbeat as they go out the door, but that's half his job. The girls don't look as focused as they did last week. Like when the other team was inbounding the ball one of James's players was in another world doing a dance.



When half time's over James' players come out and take their practice shots looking like it's a brand new game. It resumes and the ball goes back and forth, with terrible passes and total air balls. Then Roots scores the first basket of the half. Then they score the second basket. That makes it 15-8, not so far behind. I can see them decide they have a chance. They drive, they shoot, they get rebounds. They make passes over the heads of the other team to places on the court where no one on the Roots team is. But the other team makes mistakes that are just as crazy. The Roots girls are more aggressive. They fight for the ball. They fight for the ball the way I've never seen it fought for in a basketball game. A girl can't pass the ball because the other team is swarmed around her waving their arms and slapping at the ball. She goes down on the floor and lays on the ball likes it's a football until her teammates work their way to her rescue. One of them takes a handoff, or tries for it. The ball gets away from everyone, rolls out of bounds, but it's Roots ball. The second half went that way for Roots, and they played like they knew they could win. They made baskets. They made foul shots. They played defense good enough to keep the other team from scoring, and they won 16–15.

One of the moms congratulates James. He is beaming of course, big handsome guy with his mother's dimples and my nose. He tells her, "I didn't do anything. They won it."

Denny Riley is an Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, a writer, and a member of the San Francisco chapter of Veterans For Peace.

A Visit to World War I

By Paul Appell

While attending an agricultural convention in Kansas City, I checked out the National World War I Museum and Memorial on my early morning run. Even though it has one of the largest collections of WWI artifacts and is dedicated to sharing the stories of the Great War through the eyes of those that lived it, I was not sure that I wanted to spend my free afternoon looking at jingoistic pro-war items. As Viet Thanh Nguyen has written, "The memories the living create of the dead are strategic resources in the campaigns of future wars."

But after reading the message on the first part of the great frieze, which was "Behold a pale horse and his name that sat on him was death and hell followed with him," I thought that maybe the war would be portrayed realistically and would be worth a look.

The museum/memorial is on a tactically strategic hill overlooking downtown Kansas City and had the feel of a mas-

sive bunker. I first visited the Revolutions 1917 exhibit in Exhibit Hall. The hall had the flags of all the countries involved in the war hanging around the perimeter of the room with a massive skylight in the center of the 25-foot-high ceiling. Below the flags were red banners with messages from those who experienced the war. Every one of the banners would have been welcomed at any antiwar march. The first banner near the U.S. flag said, "Destroy democracy at home while fighting for it abroad." The second stated, "With a hideous apathy this country has acquiesced in a regime of judicial tyranny, bureaucratic suppression and industrial barbarism." Next was, "A fight for the minds of men, for the conquest of their convictions." This sentiment continued with many more red banners.

Individual display cases with full-size photos as well as uniforms and clothing of those soldiers, sailors, and citizens who said no to the war filled the hall. A few cases contained the artifacts and brief history of the Russian revolutions. The



Poilus' Revolution: The Army Mutinies of 1917 were depicted. By December 31, 1917, there had been 21,174 French desertions. General Petain ordered that the mutinies "be dealt with firmly, but with moderation, not forgetting the fact that the mutineers were men who had been with us in the trenches for three years, our sol-

diers." 499 men were sentenced to death with 27 actually executed.

The German naval mutiny of 1917 display stated that at one point half the fleet's sailors had left their ships. A letter by one of the organizers of the mutiny, able seaman Albin Kobes, was displayed:

continued on page 23 ...