

# Peace in Our Times



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

## The NRA and the Safari Club Are Gunning for Grizzlies

Grizzly bear just outside Gardiner, Mont., on a cool, Autumn morning.  
Photo: Horsefeathers Photography by Brad Orsted,  
horsefeathersphotography.com



By Doug Peacock

The gun lobby and big-game hunters are teaming up to get the bears off the endangered species list. But that's just a first step toward stealing public land.

The NRA has become the bully who thinks he can run over anyone and domi-

As this issue was going to press, Chief District Judge Dana. L. Christensen in Montana restored Endangered Species Status to the Greater Yellowstone grizzly, saying the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had exceeded its legal authority in delisting the bears. "This is a tremendous victory in these dark days. Saving the Yellowstone grizzly was at stake. I cannot think of a better victory for wild nature," said Doug Peacock on hearing of the ruling.

nate partisan issues. And the issues are no longer just those of the Second Amendment, though gun rights remain a primary test of political loyalty. The NRA is also actively trying to influence wildlife and wilderness issues, my center of interest. Last spring the NRA with the Safari Club International (SCI, a privileged group of mostly wealthy hunters dedicated to killing large and rare animals), backed a successful bill  
*continued on page 4 ...*

## Why I'm Going to Ireland to Try to Fix the United States

By David Swanson

The United States spends about five times what China does on its military. And it spends more just on its military bases in other people's countries than any country other than itself or China spends on its entire military. The United States keeps troops in almost every country on earth, including in 800 to 1,000 major military bases outside the United States. The rest of the world's nations combined (most of them U.S. allies and weapons custom-

ers) keep a couple of dozen foreign bases total. Imperialism is a uniquely U.S. illness, although everybody suffers the damage.

Ireland is a nation legally bound to maintain neutrality but actively assisting in the crimes of U.S. wars. This coming Nov. 11 is Armistice Day 100, and while Trump has been dissuaded from holding a weapons parade in Washington, he's apparently headed for France and Ireland. Come on, France, put the weapons away! Don't welcome fascists! Come on, Ireland! You can scare him off! Threaten to arrest him!

"We Serve Neither King Nor Kaiser, But Ireland," it said 100 years ago on the façade of Liberty Hall in Dublin as the Irish successfully refused to be drafted into a British war. "We Welcome Neither President Nor Imperial Buffoon" might be a good new banner to promote a Trump-free Ireland.

Within days of Trump's possible visit, and of worldwide celebrations of peace and the movement to abolish all war on Armistice Day 100, I'll be taking part, along with people from all over the globe, in a conference at Liberty Hall Nov. 16–18 to discuss efforts to close down U.S. and NATO military bases.

If you're like most people in the United States, you have a vague awareness that the U.S. military keeps lots of troops permanently stationed on foreign bases around the world. But have you ever wondered and really investigated to find out how many, and where exactly, and at what cost, and to what purpose, and in terms of what relationship with the host nations?

Some 800 bases with hundreds of thousands of troops in some 70 nations, plus all kinds of other "trainers" and "non-perma-  
*continued on page 16 ...*



Liberty Hall in Dublin 100 years ago: 'We Serve Neither King nor Kaiser, But Ireland.'

## Letters to the Editor

### If You Support Trump, Walk Your Talk

Mr. Trump has:

1) Issued rhetoric that empowered white supremacists and racists leading to violent demonstrations around the country where people have been injured and died as a result.

2) Signed order to allow the dumping of coal waste into the rivers.

3) Praised a foreign leader (Duterte) for his policy of sanctioning the extrajudicial killings of over 20,000 suspected drug dealers and users.

4) Overseen psychological torture of 3,000 children by forcefully separating them from their parents, holding them in animal cages, and then deporting their parents without their children when all they were doing was seeking asylum fleeing violence.

5) Undermined international cooperation on climate change claiming it is a “Chinese Hoax” as temperatures soar around the world breaking records, people are dying, and the West Coast of the United States and Canada is on fire.

6) Appointed Scott Pruitt, who was forced to resign but not before he gutted the EPA, which formerly cleaned up waterways and the air and protected the public from corporate polluters.

7) Appointed head of the Department of Education Betsy DeVos, who has no educational experience (sister of Eric Prince, Blackwater CEO who fled to Saudi Arabia to avoid prosecution), depriving the nation’s children of a qualified administrator.

8) Provided the worst example of a man to the youth of this country as he faces lawsuits from a half-dozen women who are charging him with sexual assault and made payoffs to Playboy playmate Karen McDougal and porn star Stormy Daniels, both of whom he was having affairs with while he was married.

9) Damaged relationships with countries around the world and further ruined our image abroad.

10) Destabilized the world and caused the doomsday clock to move to two minutes before world destruction.

These are just a few of the many things

that seems to have escaped his supporters’ jaded memory.

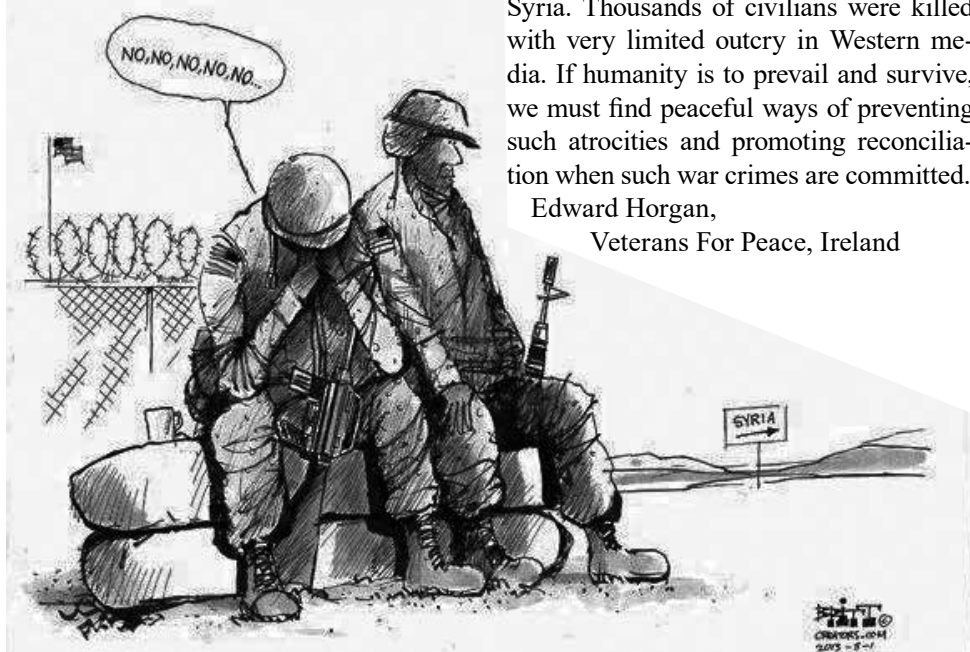
I suggest [people that support Trump] refuse to accept [their] Social Security checks, stop going to the library, and don’t bother to call the Volunteer Fire Department if [their houses] ever catch on fire because that would be supporting democratic socialism and leave out the “God forbid,” since Jesus and the Apostles were socialists!

Steve Romine  
Woodstock, NY

### Peaceful Ways to End War Crimes

Some people are critical of the lack of international protest “as Syria, Russia and Iran are allowed to act with impunity ... in their assault against Idlib.” In reality there has been very widespread international condemnation of Russia, Syria, and Iran for their military actions in Syria, some of it justified. From an international law point of view, Russia and Iran are not in direct breach of the U.N. charter by providing military support to U.N. member Syria, but in some cases breaches of international and humanitarian laws have been committed by these countries when civilians were recklessly killed in air strikes, and human rights abuses were committed by Syrian government forces. But it must be pointed out that the United States and its allies, including NATO, have been in very clear breach of the U.N. Charter by carrying out military attacks and supporting the attempted overthrow of the Syrian government without U.N. approval. Tens of thousands of foreign and Syrian fighters associated with ISIS and al Qaeda have been relocated to Idlib province. They have little prospect of returning to their own countries, and many of these fighters are both perpetrators and victims. It’s likely that the countries that helped train and finance them always intended to abandon them. In modern wars innocent civilians, conscript soldiers and manipulated fanatics are slaughtered while the major war criminals and state terrorists go free. Similar massacres happened when U.S.-supported forces captured and destroyed Mosul in Iraq, and Raqqa in Syria. Thousands of civilians were killed with very limited outcry in Western media. If humanity is to prevail and survive, we must find peaceful ways of preventing such atrocities and promoting reconciliation when such war crimes are committed.

Edward Horgan,  
Veterans For Peace, Ireland



## A Note from the Editors

### Put One in the Win Column

A reporter once asked A.J. Muste if he thought standing in front of the White House with a candle at night would change the country’s policies. Muste replied, “Oh I don’t do this to change the country. I do this so the country won’t change me.”

Today’s campaigners for peace and justice know how Muste felt, rarely seeing any indication of success and rarer still, any sign that their personal efforts made a difference. We press on, looking for ways to break through, but with Muste’s words in mind.

But then along comes an unforeseen opening from a most unlikely place, TV’s annual Emmy Awards.

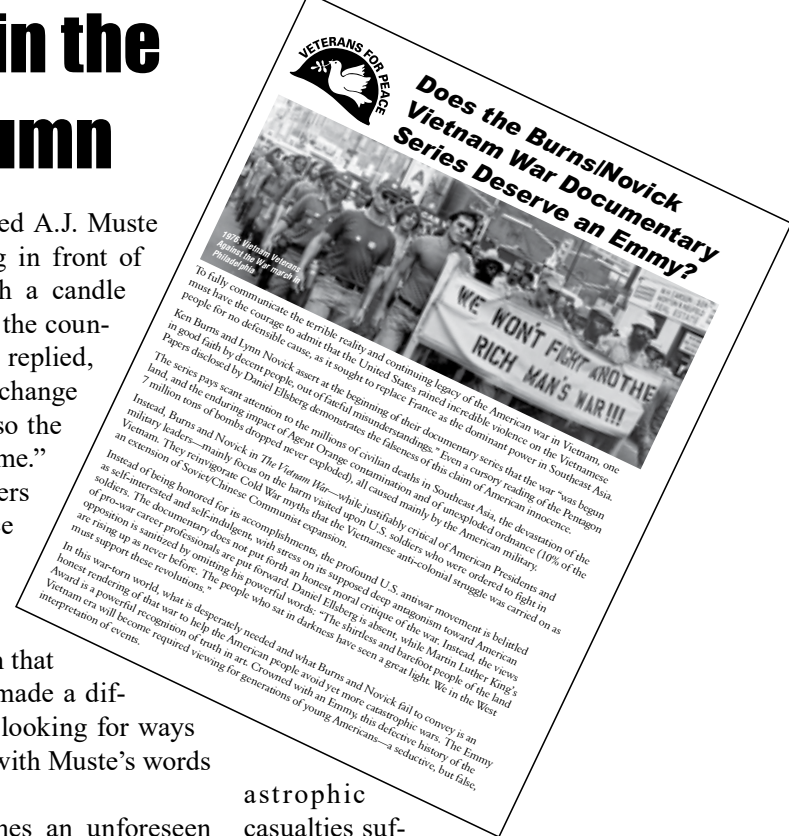
Dave Clennon, an LA-based actor and long-time antiwar activist, anticipated that Ken Burns and Lynn Novick might be awarded a “Best Documentary” nomination for their massive, 18-hour, *The Vietnam War*, a flawed documentary that he felt did not deserve that award. Wouldn’t it be a good idea to create a debate over whether or not they should, based on the critical pieces they left out?

Dave’s idea was enough to get a crew of VFP members already involved with Vietnam Full Disclosure (vietnamfulldisclosure.org) and supporters to organize a project, the elements of which were a well-crafted ad placed in a major Hollywood publication, as well as online articles explaining the concerns and personal appeals to individuals with influence.

Ultimately, the series did not get nominated as a whole, understandable when considering judges weren’t likely to view all 18 hours, but one of the 10 segments was chosen for best direction and best writing.

Whole or in part, the effect would be similar: crowned with television’s most prestigious award, Burns’ and Novick’s work would become the definitive history of that war, woven into popular culture and the legends of U.S. history taught in schools.

The full-page ad in *Variety*, given optimum placement by the editors, noted the series made only brief mention of the cat-



astrophic casualties suffered by the Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Thai people; characterized the U.S. peace movement as self-absorbed and anti-GI; and skipped over the movement by active-duty GIs to thwart the war effort at every turn, as portrayed in David Zeiger’s powerful documentary, *Sir, No Sir!*

Those shortcomings were surpassed by VFP’s overarching concern, however, that the series never strayed far from the narrator’s words in Episode One that the war in Vietnam “was begun in good faith by decent people, out of fateful misunderstandings.” As VFP’s ad in *Variety* observed, “Even a cursory reading of the Pentagon Papers disclosed by Daniel Ellsberg demonstrates the falseness of this claim of American innocence.”

Did our efforts make any difference in this case? We’ll probably never know for sure. But the historical record has been revised and, faithful to Muste’s spirit, we haven’t allowed the country to change what we know is true.

—Mike Ferner

## Correction

In the spring issue of *Peace in Our Times*, Noriko Oyama was listed as being on the VFP Okinawa delegation. That was a mistake, she was not there. Apologies to all concerned.

### Peace in Our Times

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

**Website coordinator:** Fred Nagel

## Glimmers of Hope in Groundswell of Revolt Against Democratic Party Establishment

# The Death of the Old and Arrival of the Young

By Chris Wright

If there is a silver lining in Donald Trump's sadistic presidency, we saw it on vivid display on June 26. The victories of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ben Jealous against establishment candidates confirm what many have been saying since last year, that Trump is one of the greatest recruiting tools the left has ever had. He is, as it were, a personification and distillation of all the evils of neoliberal capitalism, all the decadence, the corruption, the awe-inspiring greed and misanthropy, the savage disregard for humanity and all things living in the cause of a debased and orgiastic self-glorification whose telos is the self-immolation of civilization itself. Combined with the success of Bernie Sanders' campaign, the barbarity of the Trump administration is inspiring a new generation of leftists.

Let's just take a moment to revel in and reflect on the victories of June 26. In themselves they might not seem like much, at least in light of the enormity of the crises we're facing, but it's clear, at any rate, that Nancy Pelosi is wrong: it isn't just one or a few districts we're talking about, it's a nationwide groundswell of activism against the kind of politics she symbolizes; namely, obedient service to

House leadership. Fascism is a youthful, virile creed.) Given the senescence of the Democrats, the moribund quality of their leadership is hardly a surprise.

On the other side, with the notable exception of Bernie Sanders, is relative youth. Ocasio-Cortez is 28; Jealous is 45; Kshama Sawant in Seattle is 44; Keith Ellison is 54; Dana Balter, who defeated the DCCC-supported Juanita Perez Williams in a race in New York, is 42; Chokwe Antar Lumumba, left-wing mayor of Jackson, Mississippi, is 35; and in general, a tidal wave of millennials is poised to engulf local and state politics. National organizations have sprung up to help young progressives run and win, and groups like Indivisible and the Democratic Socialists of America are proving effective in their advocacy of candidates. Young women are running in record numbers.

However fatuous it sounds, I can't help remarking that leaders of past revolutions have tended to be quite young. Robespierre, Danton, Mirabeau, Desmoulins, Saint-Just, Brissot, and their colleagues were between their 20s and (in one case) early 40s; so were Jefferson, Madison, the two Adamses, Hancock, Hamilton, and most of the other "Founding Fathers" during the American Revolution. Trotsky and most Bolsheviks were not yet 40 in



Socialist Seattle City Councilmember Kshama Sawant

historic function of overseeing, in partnership with Republicans, the shredding of the postwar social contract, the decimation of organized labor, the global triumph of the capitalist mode of production, and the inauguration of a new Gilded Age. That was the service rendered by the likes of the Clintons, Obama, Biden, Pelosi, Schumer, Harry Reid, Tom Daschle, the whole rotten lot of them. It was an almost wholly negative service, except in that—as Marx might see it—the class struggle has been brought to a screaming pitch of intensity and the door to radical change has once again been opened. At the nadir of the neoliberal era, with a buffoonish man-child capitalist-poster-boy at the helm of the ship of state, popular

But in substance the Democrats were never committed to anything like genuine populism, so their "failures" are in reality a reflection of their priorities. By their fruits ye shall know them. (It's also true, though, that there is a remarkable amount of incompetence at the top of the Democratic Party. Hillary Clinton's campaign, for instance, was stunningly incompetent.)

Whether the party can, even on local or state levels, be transformed from an agent of reaction to one of democracy remains to be seen. The strategy of "boring from within" has, historically, yielded disappointment after disappointment, from the Populists of the 1890s to countless attempts by organized labor to push the party left. On the other hand,

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*... [A]s Marx might see it—the class struggle has been brought to a screaming pitch of intensity and the door to radical change has once again been opened.*

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Jackson, Miss., Mayor Chokwe Lumumba.

the corporate sector. She and her elderly colleagues at the summit of the centrist power-hierarchy are on their way out, both politically and even existentially.

The "age" factor is of interest and importance. On one side there are the old representatives of business, corrupted from decades at the center of power: Pelosi, 78; Steny Hoyer, 79; Jim Clyburn, 77; Maxine Waters, 79; Diane Feinstein, 85; Chuck Schumer, an impressively young 67; Patrick Leahy, 78; Dick Durbin, 73; Bill Nelson, 75; Richard Blumenthal, 72. You get the point. The 115th Congress is among the oldest in history, with an average age in the House of 58 years and an average age in the Senate of 62. (The Republican House leadership is over two decades younger than the Democratic

1917. Such has always been the pattern, from Thomas Müntzer in the German Peasants' War to Castro and Che Guevara in the Cuban Revolution. America, of course, is nowhere near a revolution—in fact, some such seizure of power is likely hopeless in conditions of advanced capitalism—but with the mass entrance onto the political stage of a younger generation not jaded from a lifetime of disappointment or brainwashed from old propaganda about socialism or the virtues of centrism, U.S. politics may be at the beginning of a long march to the left. Or at least away from the center, to both the semi-fascist right and, on a broader scale among the sane majority, the left.

The Democratic Party's leadership for the last generation has served its heinous

movements are beginning—one hopes—to point the way to a new political economy. Leaders can, it seems, be elected even without funding from the corporate sector, which makes them beholden only to their popular constituency. The worse things get under Trump and afterwards, the more people will be radicalized, and the better things may get in the long run.

Again, it's worth pausing at this moment of the changing of the guard—a moment that will, of course, last years, as we wait for the old guard to die off or lose elections—to consider just how abject the leadership of the Democratic Party is. Insofar as it was ever even nominally committed to helping the poor, the working class, and minorities, it has failed abysmally. It gave us Bush and it gave us Trump, and it gave us the Bush-lite and the Trump-lite administrations of Bill Clinton and Obama. Obama wanted to be a transformative figure, and in a sense he succeeded: he transformed millions of hopeful idealists into disillusioned cynics.

one cannot simply extrapolate the future from the past. History is not a science; with changed circumstances can come changed outcomes. In all likelihood, left-wing leaders will emerge in the context both of third parties and of the Democratic Party, which in the long run will itself become more leftist—while at the same time full of internal conflict (much as the Labour Party of Jeremy Corbyn has been—and the Republican Party, for that matter).

But for now, I think we're entitled to some savoring of Joe Crowley's defeat and some cautious optimism about the future. God knows we could use a bit of hope, after decades of defeat.

Chris Wright has a PhD in U.S. history from the University of Illinois at Chicago. He is the author of *Notes of an Underground Humanist and Worker Cooperatives and Revolution: History and Possibilities in the United States*. His website is [wrightswriting.com](http://wrightswriting.com).

# Grizzlies

... continued from page 1

to permit extreme killing methods of wolves and grizzlies on national wildlife refuges in Alaska, including the gunning down of animals from planes and slaughtering wolf pups and bear cubs in their birthing dens.

At this writing, the House Committee on Natural Resources passed HR3668, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Act. Democrats Abroad said, SHARE "is a nightmare for human life, wildlife, and public lands. The bill is chock-full of anti-wildlife, anti-Endangered Species Act, and anti-public lands provisions that would undermine wildlife conservation and put imperiled species in greater danger." Of course, the NRA got an easy-to-buy gun silencer deal stuck into this shithouse of a bill.

So, it was no surprise when the NRA and Safari Club asked to intervene in a lawsuit over the fate of Yellowstone National Park's grizzly bear population. Their intent is to support Trump's decision to remove the bears' Endangered Species Act protections and allow trophy hunting of Yellowstone's grizzlies.

Five NRA and Safari Club members said, in affidavits submitted by their attorneys, that hunting grizzlies would help the region's economy, allow states to better manage the animals, and improve public safety. These five outfitters and big game hunters claim their interests would be harmed if they could not have the opportunity to hunt Yellowstone's grizzlies.

Their core argument is public safety: that hunting bears will make people safer by instilling in grizzlies a fear of humans. These groups claim that Yellowstone's grizzlies have become too aggressive, and that a fear of people would make bears shy and more subordinate, thus benefiting public safety. The unexamined assumption is that bears learn by being shot at.

I disagree strongly with the NRA and SCI's contention that there is any credible evidence whatsoever that hunting makes grizzlies shy, wary of humans, and therefore less aggressive and safer around humans.

And there is legitimate doubt that trophy grizzly hunting around Yellowstone is, in truth, good for the economy, or that the state management is more effective than federal oversight when it comes to endangered species like the grizzly bear.

The shy bear argument, which I've been hearing in Montana bars for 50 years, is good-old-boy folklore. I do not believe trophy hunting—especially the guided type characteristic of Safari Club hunting—makes one an "expert" on grizzly bears. My own encounters with wild bears have made me believe that, in fact, the opposite is true: The key to safely dealing with wild grizzlies is behaving nonaggressively.

## Does Hunting Make Bears Fear Humans?

Grizzly bear biologist David Mattson, who worked for two decades with the federal Yellowstone Grizzly Bear Study Team, recently wrote an article in the *Grizzly Times* saying he had undertaken a "thorough review



Doug Peacock.



Two grizzly siblings who were orphaned at six months when a hunter shot their mother, shown here at three-and-a-half years old. Photo: Horsefeathers Photography by Brad Orsted, [horsefeathersphotography.com](http://horsefeathersphotography.com).

of the evidence (or lack thereof)," and found "no empirical support for this proposition." There is essentially no evidence that a sport hunt instills fear in grizzlies. The proposition also defies logic and everything that we otherwise know about grizzly bears.

The NRA and Safari Club theory that hunting—as a perceived threat—thereby installs fear in bears is counterintuitive. Mattson believes the reverse may be true, that "grizzlies can become less reactive to people, not as a result of heightened fear, but rather as a result of the opposite. These fundamentals alone call into question the logic of using hunting to increase human safety."

My own 50 years of experience with Yellowstone's wild grizzlies supports Mattson's position.

Here is one of my earliest encounters, from the preface

*It's not just the Yellowstone ecosystem and Bear's Ears mesas that are imperiled, but also the underlying philosophy and concepts that made these places possible in the first place.*

of *Grizzly Years*:

"The big bear stopped 30 feet in front of me. I slowly worked my hand into my bag and gradually pulled out the Magnum. I peered down the gun barrel into the dull red eyes of the huge grizzly. He gnashed his jaws and lowered his ears. The hair on his hump stood up. We stared at each other for what might have been seconds but felt like hours. I knew once again that I was not going to pull the trigger. My shooting days were over. I lowered the pistol. The giant bear flicked his ears and looked off to the side. I took a step backward and turned my head towards the trees. I felt something pass between us. The grizzly slowly turned away from me with grace and dignity and swung into the timber at the end of the meadow. I caught myself breathing heavily again, the flush of blood hot on my face. I felt my life had been touched by enormous power and mystery."

That was the last time I carried a firearm into grizzly country. I found you didn't need them. I believe to this day that a gun will get you into more trouble than it will get you out of in bear habitat.

More than a dozen different sow grizzlies have aggressively charged me. (None completed her charge; no wild bear has ever touched me.) A few mother grizzlies started the charge, then quickly veered off and ran away without breaking stride. More often, charging bears

came directly at me, and then skidded to a stop. One sow grizzly stopped so close (probably six feet) she appeared to lean forward and sniff my pant leg.

During the course of all these grizzly charges, my behavior was as nonaggressive as possible: I stood my ground without moving a muscle or blinking an eye; I looked off to the side (a frontal orientation can be confrontational to a grizzly). I also held my arms off to the side (to make yourself look bigger?) and talked softly to the bear, hoping to present no threat whatsoever to her cubs. It's worked every time—so far.

This spectrum of grizzly behavior hints at a deeper social structure than bears have previously been given credit for. All wild bears in a region appear to know each other and where they rank in a larger social hierarchy. Wild grizzlies are capable of responding to nonaggressive human behavior in surprising ways; we need to give them a chance. The simplistic notion that hunting and shooting grizzlies makes the bears fear humans is flat wrong.

## States or Feds Better at Managing Bears?

The NRA and Safari Club's argument that the states of Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho are better fit than the feds to manage trophy animals is disingenuous. It has nothing to do with wildlife management competency, and everything to do with their larger political agenda.

The first objective of these two trophy-hunting groups is to kill grizzlies, and the states—especially Wyoming—will help them achieve this goal in record time. (In my own state, the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks has decided to put off a trophy grizzly hunt for 2018.)

If delisting survives its legal challenges and a hunting season is opened, illegal killing of grizzlies will become much easier (with or without a license) and will loom as the primary threat to Yellowstone's entire bear population.

Then there is the issue of public lands. The NRA and the Safari Club have not bothered to intervene in this regional hunting squabble because they believe the local state game departments of Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho will better manage the region's critters than would a federal agency.

These national groups have become involved with the fate of grizzlies in order to serve a broader agenda: converting public land to private ownership. To put it bluntly, stealing the land that belongs to all of us and delivering it to the private sector for financial exploitation. They would auction off the vast wild lands of the Bureau of Land Management, national forests, and wildlife refuges, and open national monuments and even the national parks to resource extraction.

All public lands are threatened by this so-called "states rights" movement. It's not just the Yellowstone ecosystem and Bear's Ears mesas that are imperiled, but also

continued on page 18 ...

# Immigration Stories Miss Context of Imperialism and Pillage

By Jane Regan

I teach journalism. So, of course, I follow journalism closely.

On the immigration issue, many news outlets have been doing a great job covering the rallies and marches, the “baby jails” and rulings and (few) family reunifications.

But they lack context.

In the classroom, I emphasize that every news story—even a little one about a city sidewalk repair—must provide context.

Recent news stories certainly provide some context and numbers. And many tell harrowing and important specific stories, but they mostly don’t get into the structural causes, the deep history. I worry that readers and viewers are not getting the whole story.

What about specific references to international law, like to the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) and its promise (in Article 14) that all people have “the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution”? It was ratified by the United States, and is thus “the supreme law of the land,” according to Article VI of the U.S. Constitution.

I’d argue that every single news story should remind

family? Healthcare is pricey everywhere. Education is often not free. Shelter and food are expensive.

In 2015, the Food and Agriculture Organization was pleased to announce that only 5.5 percent of the population in Latin American and the Caribbean was “undernourished.” Sounds like a low number, right? Wrong. At the time, 5.5 percent equaled 34 million men, women and children definitely not “free from want.”

Readers and viewers need to be reminded of that hunger, and—more important—of the historical and political contexts at least partly responsible for it.

Countries of this hemisphere have borders mostly established by invading armies and settlers from Europe. There were no walls to keep the Spanish, Portuguese, French, and English out. The indigenous people living in this hemisphere in the 15th and 16th centuries had no say on their “immigration crisis.” The entire hemisphere was converted into colonies where local populations and imported African slaves were tortured, killed and/or exploited for centuries.

In the 19th century, as European powers’ hold on the hemisphere weakened, and even before some countries achieved independence, another kind of invasion took place, this one from the north.

U.S. businesses found ample opportunities to scoop

Starting with a 1905 invasion of the Dominican Republic and scores of times since then, soldiers, spies and mercenaries have repeatedly intervened in nearly every country south of the Rio Grande. Sometimes they stayed, setting up puppet governments overseen by multi-year occupation armies. On other occasions, Washington backed mercenaries and paramilitary forces who overthrew democratically elected leaders.

What are the long-term effects of policies and acts that are nothing short of imperialism? Many would argue that they are at least partly responsible for massive poverty: About one-quarter of the region’s population lives below the poverty line, set at \$5.50 per day, according to the World Bank.

What kind of “security of the person” is possible with these kinds of numbers? And why doesn’t it matter if one has a “credible fear” of the “harm” resulting from malnutrition? From lack of jobs and opportunities? From criminal gangs?

With all the talk of Supreme Court candidate Brett Kavanaugh’s “originalism,” I was reminded of one last bit of context: the “original” writings and philosophy that predate the Constitution and helped inspire the U.S.’s founding ideas and ideals.

Thank you, Enlightenment philosophers and your clarification calls for freedom of speech, of religion, of thought.

One freedom many of them discussed was freedom of movement, an idea that dates back to ancient Greek and Roman scholars, according to University of New Wales Professor Jane McAdams (Melbourne Journal of International Law, 2011). She notes that philosophers like pre-Enlightenment thinker Hugo Grotius (1583–1645),



Anti-ICE vigil on the bridge in Damariscotta, Maine, June 30. Photos: Ellen Davidson.

that it is not illegal to cross a border and seek asylum.

In order to obtain political asylum here, a person must have a “well-founded fear of persecution or harm on account of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion,” according to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website.

Historically, every year U.S. courts have determined that tens of thousands of people turning up at the U.S. border have that kind of well-founded fear—over 23,000 in 2014 and over 26,000 in 2015, according to the Migration Policy Institute. That might sound like a lot of people, but those numbers are tiny, given the U.N. High Commission on Refugees says the planet is witnessing “the highest levels of displacement on record,” with 24.5 million refugees and 3.1 million asylum-seekers. Compared to countries like Turkey and Uganda, who are hosting 3.5 and 1.4 million refugees respectively, the United States is doing little.

But what about another promise of the UNDHR, Article 3, that all people in member nations have “the right to life, liberty and security of person”? What if someone has a “well-founded fear” of “harm” due to lack of security?

The U.N. Development Program defines human security as “freedom from fear and freedom from want.” What if your spouse beats you? What if gangs and thugs harass your little shop and demand tribute payments? What if there are no jobs that will support you and your

up land, launch industries and run banks. They were encouraged by the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the 1903 Platt Amendment, which noted without any irony that the United States could invade Cuba for, among other purposes, “the preservation of Cuban independence.”

Writing some 50 years ago in *The Open Veins of Latin America*, Eduardo Galeano noted that even though the colonial era had officially ended, “our region still works as a menial ... at the service of others’ needs, as a source and reserve of oil and iron, of copper and meat, of fruit and coffee, the raw materials and foods destined for rich countries.”

Later in the book, he wrote: “Hasn’t our experience throughout history been one of mutilation and disintegration disguised as development? Centuries ago the conquest cleared out lands to plant crops for export and annihilated the indigenous populations in the mines to satisfy the demand abroad for silver and gold.”

That has not changed much since the book appeared.

In 2016, the World Bank reported that four of the top five exports from the region were raw materials, and the fifth was automobiles—U.S., European, or Asian vehicles assembled south of the border. Top trading partners? The United States, followed by China. No wonder Galeano subtitled his classic, “Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent.”

What happened when U.S. companies’ “pillage” was threatened? The Marines would show up.

whose work contributed to international jurisprudence, carried the idea forward when he wrote in 1625 of the right of a person to temporarily sojourn in a foreign country “for the sake of health, or for any other good reason; for this also finds place among the advantages which involve no detriment.”

John Locke (1632–1704), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), and others also thought freedom of movement was one of the “natural rights,” according to McAdams.

Writing in 1774, Thomas Jefferson agreed, noting that everyone had “a right, which nature has given to all men, of departing from the country in which chance, not choice, has placed them, of going in quest of new habitations, and of there establishing new societies, under such laws and regulations as, to them, shall seem most likely to promote public happiness.”

In today’s world, with its borders and customs agents and walls and razor wire, freedom of movement has become detached from the rest of the liberal philosophy that underpinned our revolutionary generation. Why not give those who were born—as Jefferson put it—into a country which “chance, not choice, has placed them” the opportunity to go “in quest of new habitations”? Perhaps resurrecting freedom of movement as a “natural right” would at least partly make up for the centuries of pillage and invasion.

Jane Regan is associate professor of the practice at the College of Communication at Boston University.

# Civil Disobedience or Civil Resistance?

## A Distinction That Matters

By Ellen Barfield

The theory and practice of nonviolent direct action, disrupting the system enough to risk arrest, to challenge war and warmaking, are living and evolving. Some frequent arrest-riskers have experienced a growing frustration with the inaccuracy of the still widely used wording “civil disobedience,” and are using the term “civil resistance” instead.

“Disobedience” means breaking a specific law which is or embodies the problem, such as African-Americans breaking racist Jim Crow municipal ordinances by sitting in at lunch counters legally prohibited from serving them, or Indians processing their own salt from sea water or spinning thread and weaving khadi cloth instead of buying them as legally required from the occupying British. While challenging oppressive laws when possible is perfectly valid, the complex web of laws and policies governments use to prepare and perpetrate war do not lend themselves to direct breaking.

Peace and antiwar activists contend that what governments and corporations do to prepare and perpetrate war is illegal, and they consider their own actions of civil “resistance” to the governments or corporations as obeying higher laws, be they international treaties and human rights agreements or national constitutions or religious tenets or all of those. Civil resistance activists uphold the Nuremberg principles that citizens have responsibilities to resist illegal government crimes of aggression, act out of the necessity to technically break a minor trespass or municipal order rule to prevent a much more serious tragedy or crime, or obey such religious admonitions as “Love one another” and “Thou shalt not kill.”

The issue is more than just a semantic quibble for several reasons. Prosecutors have argued in court that, if the protesters were doing civil “disobedience,” then they already admitted they broke the law, while civil “resisters” contend they are

responsibly pointing out and objecting to law-breaking by their government.

Classic civil “disobedience” includes accepting draconian jail sentences and filling the jails.

“Resistance” is understood to include legally challenging the government’s behavior and urging juries and judges to uphold the citizen right and responsibility to protest government wrongdoing

to save lives when they acted, as their attorneys argued they had the right to do. The jury acquitted all of them, and noted in discussion afterward that they had learned a lot about the wars and appreciated the activists challenging the state.

Even when protesters are convicted, sentencing can show sympathy with their cause, as in a 2007 case where activists protesting the Iraq war occupied Colo-

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*While occasional courtroom exoneration ... is satisfying, and “getting off” can encourage others to act, the war machine mostly rolls on.*

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by acquitting accused resisters. Juries are much more likely than judges to be convinced by these arguments, so when planning actions, it’s important to create situations in which the charges are serious enough to entitle defendants to a jury trial. This help activists to establish legal precedent that resistance actions are legal. Below are a series of legal cases considered “resistance” and which were found legally justified.

Law professor John Alan Cohan, in his 2007 law review article “Civil Disobedience and the Necessity Defense,” details a series of legal cases, many of which resulted in acquittal for the activists who argued necessity or Nuremberg defenses. During the 1980s, U.S. support for oppressive regimes in Latin America and South Africa and wrongdoing by the CIA generated blockades of weapons plants and military bases and sit-ins at congressional offices, many of which resulted in juries acquitting the activists based on their necessity and Nuremberg arguments.

A 2008 Maine case involving the occupation of Sen. Susan Collins’ office to protest the Iraq and Afghanistan wars saw six of the 13 protesters go to trial and discuss their “state of mind” opposing the government’s warmaking and trying

sands of dollars of restitution. But even Plowshares actions have recently resulted in activist victories in other countries.

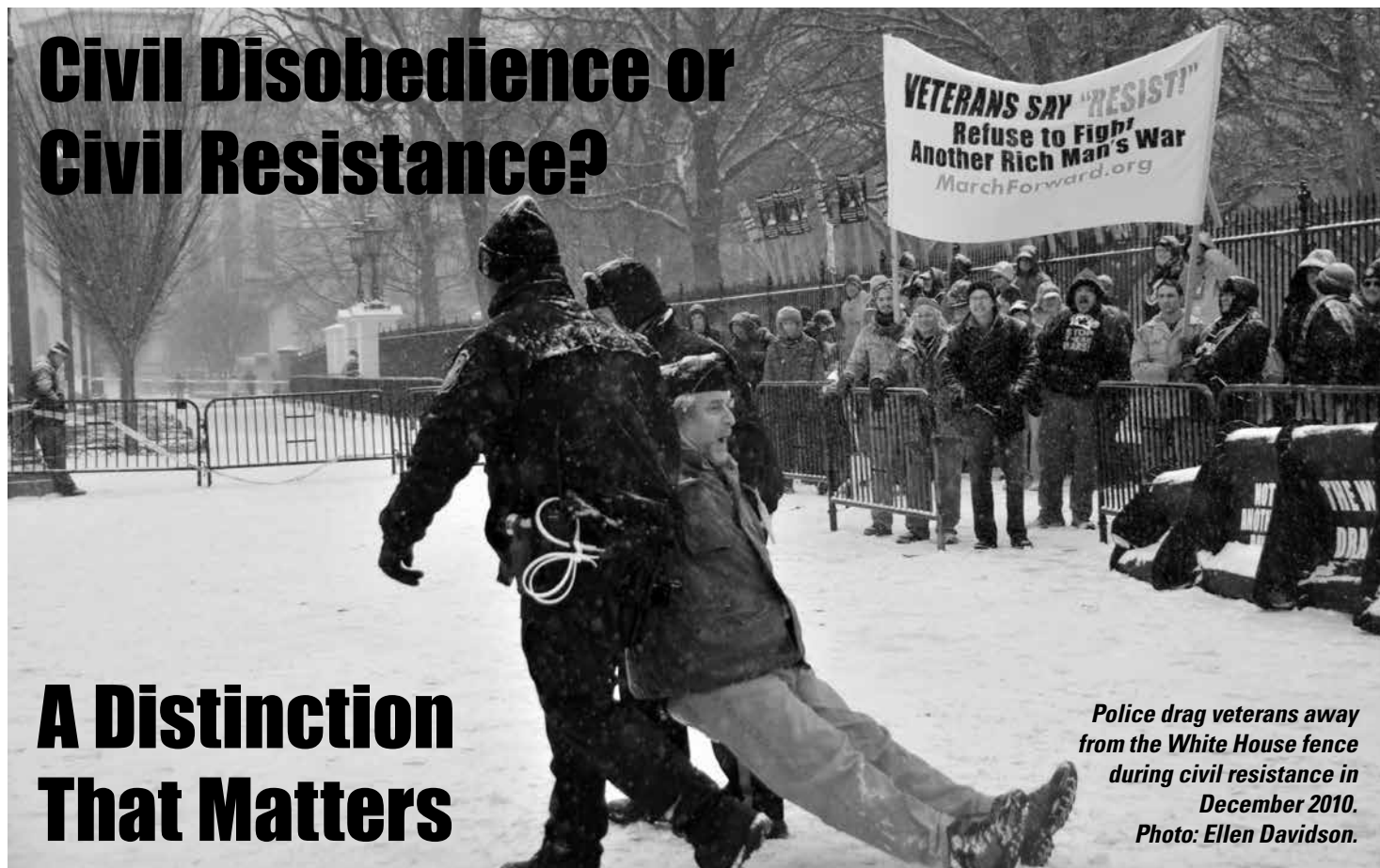
After doing 2 million pounds damage to a U.S. warplane refueling at Shannon Airport in Ireland in 2003, five activists were acquitted by the jury in 2006 after arguing that Ireland is a neutral country and U.S. troops and military cargo bound for Iraq should not be hosted there and paid for with Irish funds.

Three New Zealand (Aotearoa) activists were acquitted in March 2010, after an April 2008, action destroying the vinyl dome cover of a radio transmitter dish at the Waihopai Echelon spy base, where messages are intercepted and transmitted to the U.S. National Security Agency to facilitate U.S. military activity in Iraq. The activists argued they had a “claim of right,” similar to the necessity defense in the United States, to expose the spying and challenge Aotearoa’s connection to the Iraq War.

In June 2010 five British activists were acquitted of doing 180,000 pounds of damage in January 2009 (during Israel’s Operation Cast Lead attack on Gaza) to an EDO MBM weapons factory in Brighton, England. The plans was manufacturing items to be sold to the Israeli military and used on Palestinians. The activists argued that the corporation was misusing export licenses to ship arms illegally, and they used a “lawful excuse” defense of their actions, comparable to the U.S. necessity defense.

While occasional courtroom exoneration for activists is satisfying, and “getting off” can encourage others to act, the war machine mostly rolls on, perhaps slowed slightly by the activist grit in the cogs, but not much. An exciting recent development though, shows exactly what activists are working for. The actions damaging U.S. warplanes at Shannon Airport to dramatize that neutral Ireland should not be hosting soldiers and facilitating transport of war materiel, and the acquittal of the activists, seem to have helped the brand-new Irish government decide to uphold the 1907 Hague Convention that allows neutral countries to prevent the use of their territory for warmaking, as Switzerland has for years.

*Ellen Barfield served in the army from 19xx to 19xx. A longtime peace and justice activist, she is a former vice president of Veterans For Peace and a member of the Steering Committee of War Resisters League.*



*Police drag veterans away from the White House fence during civil resistance in December 2010. Photo: Ellen Davidson.*

rado Rep. Joseph Salazar’s office after repeatedly trying to get a meeting with him. After the activists readily admitted on the witness stand they stayed past the closing time of the office, but argued they were trying to save lives, the jury convicted the protesters of trespass, but the judge suspended \$50 fines and court costs.

More serious actions involving destruction of weapons, called Plowshares actions after the Biblical injunction to beat swords into plowshares, seldom see acquittal and can result in years of jail time and thou-



*Crystal Zevon is arrested at the Senate Hart Building for speaking out about indefinite detention of prisoners in Guantanamo. Photo: Ellen Davidson.*

By Kathie Ragsdale

A retired New Hampshire Superior Court judge is a witness in a federal anti-terrorist case that has the potential to change the way corporations do business in U.S. war zones.

“The issues of U.S. corporate influence and government secrecy versus individual U.S. citizens’ sacrifice and loss are powerful and heartbreaking,” Arthur Brennan of Weare says of the case, *Atchley v. AstraZeneca*.

Brennan, who served as a Superior Court judge for 15 years before his 2007 retirement, is involved in the case because of the job he took after stepping down from the bench: director of the U.S. Embassy’s anti-corruption office in Baghdad.

Filed in federal court in Washington, D.C., in October of last year, the suit claims that anti-American militias that killed or wounded multiple U.S. soldiers or civilians in Iraq were partly funded by five Western pharmaceutical companies through kickbacks the companies paid to do business in that country.

The firms—AstraZeneca, General Electric, Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, and Roche—denied the charges in a motion to dismiss filed in February.

The defendants argue that the plaintiffs’ arguments are tantamount to accusing the U.S. government of engaging in terrorism against U.S. forces in Iraq through its funding of the Iraqi Ministry of Health.

The companies further claim that the suit seeks “to impose liability not on terrorists and their knowing supporters, but on companies that answered the U.S. government’s call to help with the reconstruction of the Iraqi health care system,” their motion states.

The plaintiffs have filed responses and the court will likely schedule a hearing date on the motion within weeks, according to Brennan.

If the case proceeds, “There will be a discovery process that’s going to be complicated and voluminous,” he adds.

Brennan had a long history of military and international service before his posting to Iraq in 2007—he served as a platoon leader and paratrooper/jumpmaster with the U.S. Army’s 82nd Airborne Division starting in 1969, and then spent 20 years in the U.S. Army Reserve. He later worked with the International Human Rights Law Group in Cambodia. But the former judge was shocked at what he says he saw when he arrived in Baghdad: widespread corruption that was ignored by the very Americans who were there to help stabilize the country.

The lawsuit alleges that the pharmaceutical companies proffered money, medical equipment and free drugs to the corrupt Iraqi Ministry of Health in exchange for large contracts with the ministry. It further charges that the ministry was controlled by terrorists who used the kickbacks for attacks on Americans.

“The lives of the families of those killed and injured have been forever changed, and the results have been devastating,” said Ryan Sparacino, a partner at Sparacino & Andreson, in a press release about the lawsuit.

The release said the two law firms spent

## Did U.S. Companies Give Money, Medical Equipment, and Free Drugs to Corrupt Iraqi Ministry of Health?

*A lawsuit filed in federal court in Washington, D.C., last October claims that anti-American militias that killed or wounded multiple U.S. soldiers or civilians in Iraq were partly funded by five Western pharmaceutical firms*



Retired New Hampshire Superior Court Judge Art Brennan. Photo: Ellen Davidson.

thousands of hours working on the matter and that, for many of the survivors of these attacks and the families of those killed, much of what the investigation uncovered came as a shock.

“The defendants are among the biggest pharmaceutical corporations in the world and they are accused of knowingly aiding and abetting terrorists from the Mahdi Army and Hezbollah who killed and wounded the plaintiffs by pouring millions and millions of dollars through the corrupt Iraq Ministry of Health to the terrorists for training, weapons and attacks on Americans, as well as innocent Iraqi people,” Brennan says.

Meanwhile, U.S. military personnel knew of the corruption but did nothing, says Brennan, who later testified before Congress about his observations.

“I had been on the bench 15 years,” he says. “I had seen a lot of people lie to the court and that’s what I was seeing in Baghdad.”

“I don’t know what makes people change in an organization, but people can lose their way in terms of being honest and forthright.”

The lawsuit is being brought under a controversial amendment to the U.S. Anti-Terrorism Act called the Justice Against

Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA), popularly known as “the 911 Bill.”

In September 2016, Congress overrode President Obama’s veto of the measure, which gives American victims of international terrorism the right to seek compensation for their injuries and damages from those who aided and abetted the terrorists that caused them.

Its immediate effect was to allow continuation of a civil lawsuit brought by families of victims of the Sept. 11 attacks against Saudi Arabia for its government’s alleged role in the attacks (Obama opposed it because he thought it could damage the U.S. relationship with the Saudis).

Brennan believes its passage also provided momentum for the filing of the *Atchley v. AstraZeneca* suit. Some of his own reports, authored while in Baghdad, are evidence in the case.

His official title was director of the U.S. Embassy’s newly established Office of Accountability and Transparency (OAT), which helped Iraqi government watchdog agencies get a handle on widespread corruption. His team was to advise the Iraqi equivalents of the FBI, Government Accounting Office and U.S. Inspector General, as well as the Iraqi prime minister’s office.

In mid-July of 2007, his office was

asked to review and comment on a draft report being prepared for Congress and other government agencies by the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR). Brennan says SIGIR was established by Congress in 2004 to oversee the \$52 billion-reconstruction program in Iraq and provide information on the work independent of intelligence coming from the executive branch.

The draft described the commitment of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki to addressing corruption and cited the establishment of an Iraqi entity, the Joint Anti-Corruption Committee, as evidence of steps being taken to address corruption.

“To say the least, SIGIR’s positive draft report on Maliki and the Joint Anti-Corruption Committee was grossly misleading,” Brennan says. “The OAT team knew that the Maliki government was corrupt and resisting anticorruption law enforcement.”

“In fact, the leader of the much-vaunted Joint Anti-Corruption Committee was one of the most corrupt and dangerous officials in the government of Iraq, Dr. Adel Muhsin, inspector general and de facto minister of health.”

“Dr. Adel was close to Prime Minister Maliki and a member of the terrorist insurgent Mahdi Army. Dr. Adel was determined to stop investigations of corruption within the Iraqi ministries.”

Brennan’s team reviewed the draft and wrote a response “urging SIGIR to correct its mistaken and misleading draft report,” he says.

Within 24 hours, the U.S. ambassador’s deputy chief of mission recalled, withdrew and rewrote the OAT memo with its objections, Brennan says, and he was told further memos would have to be vetted by the ambassador.

Months later, in testimony before Congress, Brennan and his chief of staff, James Mattil, introduced the contrasting memos “to illustrate the habitual misinformation the Department of State was feeding Congress through SIGIR about Prime Minister Maliki and the depth of corruption in Iraq,” he says.

“I don’t know what motivates the State Department to commit the crime of deceit against the American people,” adds Brennan, who is now active in Veterans For Peace. “That’s what I felt was going on in the State Department in Iraq. When the State Department is sitting on information that could save hundreds of U.S. lives and thousands from being wounded and tens of thousands of Iraqis from being killed, there’s something wrong.”

Meanwhile, Brennan contends, the Iraqi Ministry of Health had become “a funding pipeline for the insurgents and terrorists of the Mahdi Army and Hezbollah (which) kidnapped, tortured, and murdered thousands of Sunni Iraqis.”

“Our OAT anti-corruption team knew that medical supplies and pharmaceuticals intended for the Iraqi people were showing up in the black markets of Iraq and surrounding countries,” he adds.

“We believed the profits from this corruption were supporting insurgents and terrorists who were killing and wounding

*continued on page 8 ...*

# The Fallacy of Calling McCain or Anyone Else a War Hero

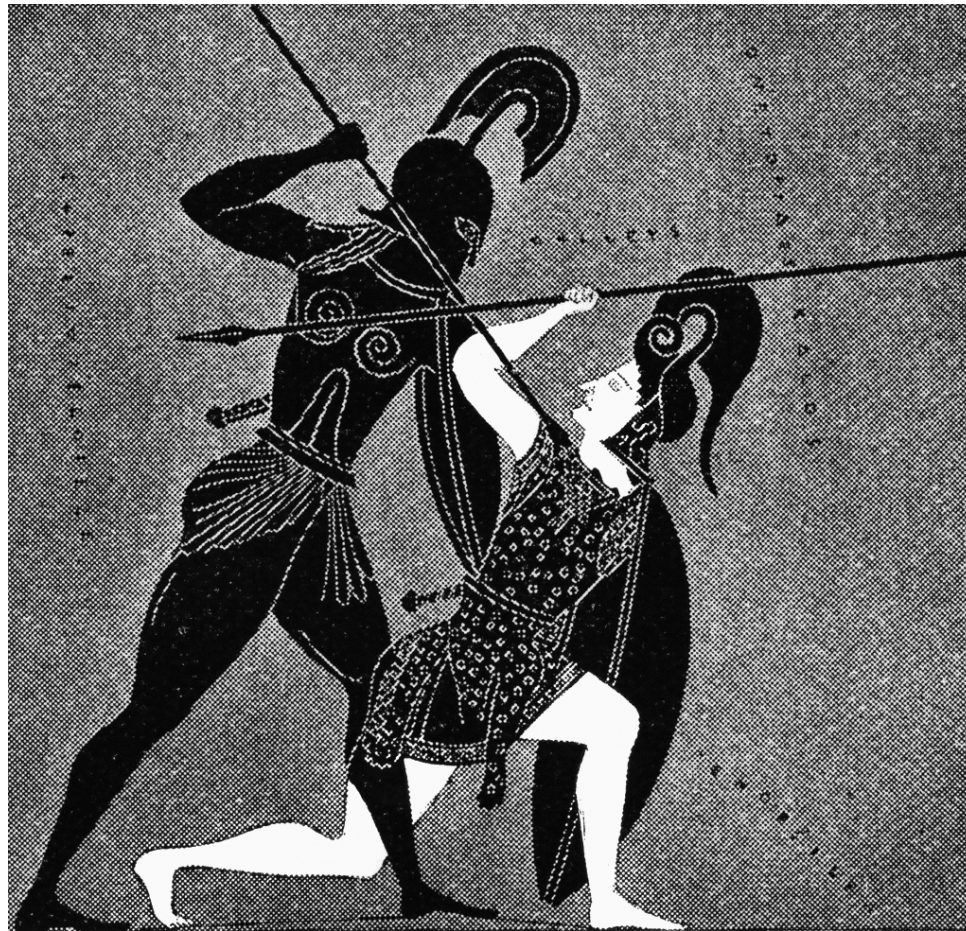
By Daniel Borgström

Obit scribblers are calling John McCain a war “hero.” Well, I have to concede that unlike so many warmongering chicken-hawks such as Karl Rove, Paul Wolfowitz, Robert Kagan, and most other neocons, McCain did actually serve in the military. But the same could be said for nearly all top Nazis, including Hitler and Goering; they fought in a war and they loved war. They were destructive persons who learned nothing positive from their military experience.

Of course, few of the pundits and politicians who are eulogizing McCain would wish to include Nazis in their hall of fame, nor would most of them care to designate most neocons as anything less than patriots. So what is it that might qualify someone as a hero, or as a war criminal? Having been in the military, I sometimes think about that. These are some thoughts that come to mind.

Heroism is sort of like morality: It’s usually defined by the powers that be. And a lot of it has to do with being in the right place at the right time. An example of that would be the five Marines in the famous photo of the flag-raising on Iwo Jima. What made them more heroic than the many thousands of other GIs who fought on that and other islands in the Pacific, you might ask. And the answer is: time and place, plus a photographer to take their picture. So they were in a dramatic photo, and that was at a time when the government needed heroes to sell war bonds.

Military discipline is such that soldiers tend to do as told, even under fire. It’s a military axiom that soldiers fear their sergeants more than they fear the enemy’s bullets, and I think there’s a huge amount of truth in that. Even though a sergeant may not be particularly fearsome, there’s a huge power structure behind him. Individual soldiers become part of the military machine.



My friend Van Dale Todd was in Vietnam and came back with medals. He didn’t seem to consider himself a “hero.” What he emphasized was that he’d been through an experience. “You don’t know what it’s like to see your buddies die!” he often said, and then one night he killed himself in front of me. That was in San Francisco, in 1972. In his diary he’d written, “How could killing humans have been fun? Can God forgive me?”

Many Vietnam veterans suffered from PTSD. Many died before their time, some shortly after coming home, others years or even decades later, in their 30s or even in their 50s, not necessarily from physical injuries, but often from invisible damage they’d incurred during the war. I never met any who considered themselves “heroes.”

War criminals? Van never spoke of himself as being a “war criminal,” but he’d been trained to enjoy killing “the enemy,” and I think it bothered him immensely that he had enjoyed it. That, I think, was a major factor in his suicide. Certainly not the only factor. He took part in antiwar actions, and it shocked him to find nobody representing the power structure (news reporters or judges) would hear what he had to say. Of course, the corporate media make a big show of honoring military personnel and veterans, but only as long as we go along with the bullshit, buy into their narrative, and regurgitate propaganda. During the Vietnam War, media pundits used to tell us that the United States was there to defend democracy, and to back it up they’d say,

“Ask a GI!” implying that people who’d been in the military believed in the war and would speak in support of it. Well, you probably know the rest of that story.

I often think of the characters in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, wondering how those guys could be considered heroes. Socrates apparently thought they were; He held Achilles up as an inspiring example of a man who stood by his principles. That strikes me as really strange. In my view, Achilles was the archetypal spoiled brat who just wanted to have his own way. Then there was Odysseus, a notorious liar, who got tangled up in his own lies, and that’s basically what brought about the loss of his ships and the deaths of his crews on the way back to Ithaca. The leader of it all was King Agamemnon, a rather poor general, also a poor father who sacrificed his own daughter, and on returning to his home at the end of the war he was killed by his wife, which is about what he deserved. Those “heroes” were made of rather poor stuff, and a couple of their gods, Zeus and Athena, both of them deceitful schemers, weren’t too great either. The only person in the *Iliad* who comes off as genuinely heroic is Hector. It’s interesting that Homer, presumably a Greek himself, would present their enemy’s champion and other Trojans as being about the only decent persons in the whole story.

Achilles, Odysseus, Agamemnon, and all the rest of them—those were the men who fought the Trojan War, the elite officer class, that is. Homer called them heroes and sang their praises, but tongue in cheek, while carefully letting us know who those guys really were.

*Daniel Borgstrom joined the U.S. Marine Corps (1959–1963), naively believing he was helping to defend our freedoms. Today he’s an antiwar activist and also a fan of film noir. He can be reached at: [daniel fortyone@gmail.com](mailto:daniel fortyone@gmail.com). His website is [danielborgstrom.blogspot.com](http://danielborgstrom.blogspot.com).*

## Iraqi Corruption

... continued from page 7

not only U.S. soldiers and civilians but thousands and thousands of innocent Iraqis.

“In 2007, between 850 and 900 U.S. soldiers were killed in Iraq and thousands more were wounded. That year, more than 22,000 Iraqi civilians were killed and about 4 million civilians were displaced.”

Brennan’s OAT team drafted an 80-page report on corruption in all of the Iraqi ministries—one that soon became Exhibit A in a fight between congressional oversight committees and then-Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Rice classified the report “to satisfy the Maliki government,” Brennan says.

The report is also potential evidence in the *Atchley v. AstraZeneca* lawsuit. In 2007 and 2008, Brennan and Mattil also defied State Department policy not to testify about corruption in Iraq and accepted a request by the U.S. House and Senate Iraq Oversight Committees to testify. They described massive corruption in the Iraqi ministries and named Dr. Muhsin as a corrupt and dangerous official.

“Despite our testimony, and the personal thanks we

got from the senators for our ‘courage,’ nothing happened beyond James and me being blacklisted by the State Department,” Brennan says. “Nothing happened for nearly 10 years, that is.”

Brennan also undertook another action when he returned to the United States—one that Mattil calls “Art’s greatest contribution.”

He worked tirelessly to get asylum in this country for several Iraqis who had worked with the Americans in Iraq, were at risk of being killed in their own country and were not being allowed refuge in the United States, Mattil explained.

Among them was Judge Radhi al Radhi, director of the Iraqi equivalent of the FBI, known as the Commission for Public Integrity.

Radhi had been imprisoned and tortured under the regime of Saddam Hussein and had also testified before Congress on the situation in Iraq. He and his family were nevertheless not being accepted into the United States until Brennan intervened.

“Art stepped up and led the effort to get legal assistance for those Iraqis and was personally supporting them financially and getting support from others,” says Mattil, who adds the group was finally given asylum here.

“He made a bigger difference in the lives of those peo-

ple than any of us made in Iraq.”

In July of 2017, attorneys from two Washington, D.C., law firms—Sparacino & Anderson, PLLC, and Kellogg, Hansen, Todd, Figel & Frederick, PLLC—contacted Brennan and met with him about his experiences in Iraq. Three months later, they filed the *Atchley v. AstraZeneca* complaint.

If the plaintiffs prevail, Brennan says, it would be a way of “bringing some justice to American families affected by the loss of family members in war when U.S. corporations are recklessly assisting terrorists and killing and wounding.

“I identify with that 19-year-old kid who thinks he’s helping his country when the people out to kill him are being financed by pharmaceutical companies,” he adds.

“A few of us decided to speak up for ‘our kids out there dying in the sand.’ Perhaps the legal battle entitled *Atchley v. AstraZeneca* will tell us whether we did the right thing. We’ll see.”

*Reprinted with permission from the New Hampshire Bar Association. Originally printed in the New Hampshire Bar News on August 15, 2018, [nhbar.org/publications](http://nhbar.org/publications).*

*Kathie Ragsdale is a freelance writer based in Chester, N.H., and a frequent contributor to Bar News.*

# Liberation Is Collective

Following are remarks given Aug. 25 at Veterans For Peace's annual convention in St. Paul, Minn., by Alice Kurima Newberry, a 24-year old Okinawan-American and the youngest member of a recent Veterans For Peace delegation to Okinawa.

I first want to thank and honor those whose land we are on, including the Santee, Odawa, Ojibwe, Potawatomi, Ojib Cree, and Algonquin people. Indigenous people have lived and will continue to live in spaces that we call home.

My name is Alice Kurima Newberry. I am the secretary for the DC Veterans For Peace chapter, a member of the Veterans For Peace ROCK chapter, I work for Greenpeace, I am 24 years old and I am indigenous and proud.

I want to start off by telling you that it is a very special time right now in Okinawa. We are having to critically organize and stand in solidarity with Okinawa as Tomasan mentioned. But I wanted to highlight that today is a very special day, it is the third day of Obon. Obon is a time where our ancestors come back to visit us. Every year, we guide our ancestors back to our world. For three days we celebrate with our ancestors and tonight, we will be saying farewell to them as they head back.

And I want to send them back with a promise. I want to promise them that there are freedom fighters and veterans who will fight to keep Okinawa the sanctuary that it once was and the sanctuary it can be. I want you to make that promise with me while they are still here with us.

My ancestors are survivors of a war that was forced upon them. Today, many Okinawans suffer generational and historical trauma from U.S. militarism, your military. They cannot escape the memory of war because it is not a memory; it is alive today and everywhere.



Alice Kurima Newberry and Toma Shisei of the Veterans For Peace Okinawan Chapter at the VFP convention Aug. 25. Photo: Ellen Davidson.

We didn't survive to be traumatized by America's never-ending wars and the need for it.

I am demanding your allyship.

We are in a time where we cannot cherry pick which issues of war are most convenient for us.

We must recognize that our liberation is collective. I will not be free until my black brothers and sisters are free from Nazi violence and police brutality. I will not be free until we abolish prisons and man camps. I will not be free until we shut down ICE and the 800 military

bases we own [on foreign soil].

I am the future of the antiwar movement and it is diverse, intersectional, and led by black, brown, indigenous, Muslim, Palestinian, trans, non-binary, and marginalized communities.

You will not be free until I am. You will not be free until Okinawa is free. I need you to invest in my future and the future of those not yet born.

Will you make a promise to the ancestors with me right now?

## 'No Liberation Without Addressing Militarism'

Brittany Ramos DeBarros, a national organizer in the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival, is a captain in the U.S. Army Reserve assigned to the Psychological Operations Command.

She has drawn on her own experience in the military to highlight state terrorism inflicted by the Armed Forces around the world as well as the high poverty and suicide rates of soldiers and veterans.

When DeBarros went on active duty in July, she scheduled a post on Twitter each day in protest, with the hashtag #Drop-TheMIC. MIC refers to the military-industrial complex, and the hashtag is used by About Face: Veterans Against the War, an organization DeBarros is part of.

Army Times ran a story alleging an investigation into her conduct. Business Insider followed up on July 23 with the headline, "An Army officer is publicly protesting the U.S. government's 'war machine'—and it's gotten the Army's attention."

DeBarros has received hundreds of comments of support on social media from fellow combat veterans and others who agree with Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's assessment that the U.S. government has become "the largest purveyor

of violence on the planet."

Below is a speech DeBarros gave June 23 in Washington, D.C., in front of thousands at the national rally organized by the Poor People's Campaign.

I'm a woman, I'm white, I'm Latina, I'm Black, I'm queer, and I'm a combat veteran. As a person existing at the intersection of these identities, I carry a grave conviction in my core that there can be



Brittany Ramos DeBarros.

as our drones have obliterated weddings, funerals, religious ceremonies, ordinary homes, and ordinary people.

It is no mistake that we are waging war in at least seven countries and all of them

those injustices have nothing to do with us. They want us to believe that the precious lives of our soldiers are being spent for the protection of our freedoms.

I spent a year witnessing the bravery and the beauty of the Afghan people, men and women, fathers and mothers, risking their lives to overcome oppressive organizations that we funded and enabled. I cannot forget their faces. This is a racial justice issue. This is a gender justice issue. This is an economic justice issue.

We begrudge the poor the pennies we give them to eat and survive but cheer for the nearly \$600 billion annually we spend on defense. The military-industrial complex is literally corporate greed weaponized. The U.S. government is the largest weapons dealer on the planet and the largest user of those weapons.

From the militarized equipment in which our police forces and federal agencies are clad to the large percentage of current and former soldiers conditioned for war and then hired to occupy our streets to keep peace, is it any wonder that our neighborhoods are treated like combat zones and our neighbors like enemy combatants?

From the toxic masculinity that objectifies our bodies as nothing more than weapons or toys to the nationalism that tears us away from the true patriotism that is demanding that America live up to the dream that it has always been.

These wars are immoral. Profiting off of killing is immoral. It is time to stand up, and we won't be silent anymore!

*For decades we have been lulled into complacency and inattention as our drones have obliterated weddings, funerals, religious ceremonies, ordinary homes, and ordinary people. It is no mistake that we are waging war in at least seven countries and all of them are mostly impoverished, Black, brown, and Muslim countries.*

no economic, racial, or gender liberation without addressing the militarism that is strangling the empathy and morality out of our society. For decades we have been lulled into complacency and inattention

are mostly impoverished, Black, brown, and Muslim countries. The same systems that shame and dehumanize us based on our skin color or documentation status or bank account here want us to believe that



2017: Black Cheerleaders at Southern Illinois University take a knee.

# Why I Choose to Take a Stand—By Taking a Knee

By Rich Whitney

The national controversy over those who choose to protest racial injustice in America by placing one knee on the ground during the playing of “The Star-Spangled Banner” doesn’t seem to be going away. The NFL announced a policy last May that any players who protest the anthem while on the field will be subject to discipline from the league. Here in Carbondale, Ill., where I reside, Southern Illinois University—or, as I like to call it, Self-Imploding University—impaled itself once again by announcing a policy forbidding student athletes, cheerleaders and spirit members from engaging in “displays of activism” while in uniform. Thankfully, after a public outcry, the university quickly reversed itself.

Last year, when three black cheerleaders at SIU bravely took a knee before an SIU football game, they were subjected to a sickening barrage of racist vitriol, including death threats, sexual assault threats, and being called the N-word.

What galls me especially is when self-appointed guardians of “patriotism” encourage such hatred by proclaiming that taking a knee during the playing of the national anthem is disrespecting the nation and disrespecting American veterans. Here’s a typical example: “Standing for the national anthem is to show respect for our nation, and to honor those who have fought for our country. Freedom isn’t free; to not stand up for those who have served in the military to allow every American to have the opportunities of

this great nation, is utterly disrespectful.”

Sad to say, our local so-called “representative” in Congress, Mike Bost (12th Congressional District, Illinois) weighed in with similar sentiments by conducting an unscientific “poll” in his taxpayer-supported e-newsletter, before spouting off that he “agrees” with those who “believe that it is disrespectful to the nation and the flag to take a knee—rather than stand—during the playing of the National Anthem.”

Added Bost: “I believe Americans owe a debt of gratitude to our nation’s bravest individuals—those who have served and risked their lives in defense of freedom and liberty. As a Marine and the father of a Marine, I believe we must remember the sacrifices of our veterans who have bravely served our nation, as well as show respect to service members currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.”

There are several things wrong with this claim that protesting during the playing of the national anthem is disrespectful to the nation or to its veterans.

First of all, the idea of taking a knee as a form of protest against unjust police killings of people of color in the United States came from U.S. Army veteran Nate Boyer, who convinced Colin Kaepernick to express his concerns over that injustice in that manner, because it was respectful.

Second, it is this claim, not the protests themselves, that disrespects and frankly insults veterans, because the people making it presume that they are somehow entitled to speak for all veterans, and that all veterans hold the same beliefs. In addition

to Mr. Boyer, there are plenty of veterans who support the national-anthem protests, most notably, the thoughtful veterans of Veterans For Peace.

Third, this claim equates love of one’s country with love of the military, as if the national anthem is meant to honor the military, not the nation—or that the two are inseparable. Granted, this nation is probably the most militarized in history, long steeped in war, and the lyrics of “The Star-Spangled Banner” certainly reflect this. Nonetheless, it is the national anthem, not the Pentagon’s anthem, and the ritual of playing it is intended to show respect for the country, not the military and U.S. wars. This is one more instance of self-appointed dogmatic “patriots” glorifying all things military and simply presuming that to be patriotic means to support every act of war by the United States—and that every such act must be just, because the United States is committing it.

Fourth, how is it possibly dishonoring the country or the military to make a symbolic statement to the effect that “I would like to make my country a better place to live, by calling for an end to the senseless unjustified killing of black people by police?” Yes, I understand the purpose of the ritual—we are supposed to come together as a people, despite our differences, and show our national unity. But that is a fiction. We are not “together as a people” when we allow some of our people to be gunned down by agents of the government in circumstances where it was not absolutely necessary to protect

someone else from being harmed. We are not “together as a people” when, in most cases, the perpetrators of police murder are allowed to escape serious consequences for their actions.

The United States has a serious problem with police violence, and if you’re not outraged by it, you haven’t been paying attention. The act of taking a knee is intended to focus people’s attention on that problem until it has been addressed. Only a committed racist or someone completely lacking in empathy could read the accounts of what happened to Tamir Rice, Laquan McDonald, Eric Garner, John Crawford III, and countless others and not be angered. The problem of police violence is at once permeated by racism and also transcends it, as (typically poor) white Americans are also victimized by it (something I have personal knowledge of as a civil rights lawyer in southern Illinois), yet black Americans are victimized roughly three times as frequently, and Native Americans are evidently being shot and killed at an even higher rate. This is not only a terrible injustice in and of itself; it is also a psychological assault, inflicting mental and emotional trauma upon people of color. Police killings in the United States provide another instance of “American exceptionalism,” and not in a good way: Our police kill people at a far higher rate than in other industrialized countries, killing more in a matter of days than the police of other nations kill in years.

Of course, police violence directed especially against people of color is but one component of a fundamentally unjust, class-based and racist criminal justice system badly in need of overhaul. There are solutions, from sensible proposals to create elected Civilian Police Accountability Councils with real authority to oversee police operations to an even more thorough transition to civilian-led policing. However, such policy solutions will not be enacted unless and until there is a public groundswell demanding their adoption. Taking a knee during the playing of the national anthem is one small but important symbolic step toward building the kind of solidarity needed to create that groundswell. We must build the kind of movement that cannot be ignored.

Finally, there is at least one more flaw in the claim that taking a knee during the playing of the national anthem disrespects those who “risked their lives in defense of freedom and liberty”: The latter claim is simply not true.

Let’s be very clear here. No doubt, many of those who chose to serve in our armed forces did so because they honestly believed that they were signing up to protect our nation and its freedoms, and I respect those who did so with that sincere belief. But the fact is that those who “risked their lives”—in Vietnam, Cambodia, Grenada, Lebanon, Panama, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Libya, Syria, and all the other nations illegally attacked by the United States since World War II—did not do so “in defense of freedom and liberty,” because not a single one of those nations ever threatened our freedom and

*continued on page 22 ...*



Colin Kaepernick Nike ad. Photo: Nike.

## On Colin Kaepernick's Nike Ad: Will the Revolution Be Branded?

*Colin Kaepernick is now the face of Nike, which raises questions we should not be afraid to ask.*

By Dave Zirin

Ready to join the resistance?

In mid-September, shock waves went through the sports and marketing worlds when news broke that the quarterback blackballed by the NFL for kneeling during the anthem to protest police violence, Colin Kaepernick, would be the face of the 30th anniversary of Nike's "Just Do It" ad campaign. The ad is an unairbrushed black-and-white close-up of Kaepernick's face with the slogan "Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything."

Immediately, this sent social media into paroxysms of confusion. Liberals and left-wing commentators found themselves largely praising the brave decision by the global sneaker behemoth, promising to buy some Nike products to show support for the move. Others on the left stopped short of singing Nike's praises but saw it as a victory for Kaepernick: He stood by his principles and now has a sweet shoe deal to show for it, which for many, further legitimizes his decision to protest.

On the right, there were calls for demonstrations against the sneaker company. #BoycottNike trended on Twitter. Scenes of people burning their sneakers or cutting the swooshes off of their clothes also went viral.

This is a head-spinning set of circumstances. Nike has for decades been a target of protests by student activists, with organizations like United Students Against Sweatshops on the front lines, for notoriously poor labor practices. Earlier this year, the company was accused of fostering a sexist work environment with chronic harassment. The opening line of a *New York Times* exposé was, "For too many women, life inside Nike had turned toxic." Then there is Nike co-founder and chairman emeritus Phil Knight, who gave \$500,000 in 2017 to Oregon Republican gubernatorial candidate Knute Buehler.

When it comes to marketing, for three decades—from Spike Lee's famous Air Jordan ads and John McEnroe's "Rebel With a Cause" campaign to its current campaigns featuring LeBron James and Serena Williams—Nike has used the image of rebellion to sell its gear, while stripping that rebellion of all its content. As Gino Fisanotti, Nike's vice president of brand for North America, told ESPN, "We

believe Colin is one of the most inspirational athletes of this generation, who has leveraged the power of sport to help move the world forward." The idea that Nike executives would position themselves as messengers of Kaepernick's righteous years-long struggle is, to put it mildly, galling.

In Nike's antiseptic, hollow corporate-speak, Kaepernick is simply "moving the world forward." There is no mention here of police violence or racism. And it would be stupid to expect it. This is Nike. Asking them to be a voice for social justice is like asking a dog to meow.

All of that being said, this is a case more complicated than just calling out Nike for commodifying dissent. Kaepernick has spent the past two years being showered with hatred and death threats, vilified on social media and from the presidential bully pulpit. In the last year, he has given away over a million dollars of his own money. He has been unable to earn a living during the prime years of his career. It is a great thing that he is actually going to earn an income and receive funding for his activist works.

It is satisfying that after two years in the political wilderness, he is getting an outpouring of support from those defending an ad with a message that reinforces the power of political sacrifice. Nike is the official sponsor of the NFL, so this ad campaign is a thumb in the eye of every owner who has colluded against him. Imagine the first time this ad plays during the commercial break of an NFL game. Jerry Jones' head might explode clean off his body. So, good for Colin Kaepernick.

But global, multibillion-dollar corporations that run an archipelago of sweatshops don't underwrite rebellions. They co-opt and quash them. If anyone can navigate this snakepit, it is Colin Kaepernick, but it won't be easy. The revolution will not be branded. We should be honest about that. The message of standing up to police violence and racial inequity shouldn't end up in a swoosh-laden graveyard. That's the risk that comes with this sponsorship. But if anyone has earned the right to take that risk, it's Colin Kaepernick.

Dave Zirin, *The Nation's* sports editor, is the author of eight books on the politics of sports, most recently, *Brazil's Dance with the Devil: The World Cup, The Olympics, and the Fight for Democracy*. He also hosts *The Nation's Edge of Sports* podcast.

## Positive Actions Bring Great Harmony

The second volume of *Letters to The Wall* is now available through [lulu.com](http://lulu.com) (go to the "Shop" link and then type in "Letters to the Wall" and "Veterans For Peace"). The volume features 127 letters that were delivered to The Wall the past two Memorial Days, as well as photos of the deliveries. The letters were written by namvets, their loved ones, men and women who have resisted the war, and many others. An excerpt from one of this year's *Letters to The Wall* is printed below. It was written by Le Ly Hayslip, author of the memoir, *When Heaven and Earth Changed Places*, and the woman featured in Oliver Stone's film, *Heaven and Earth*.

Dear men and women who sacrificed your lives on our motherland named Vietnam,

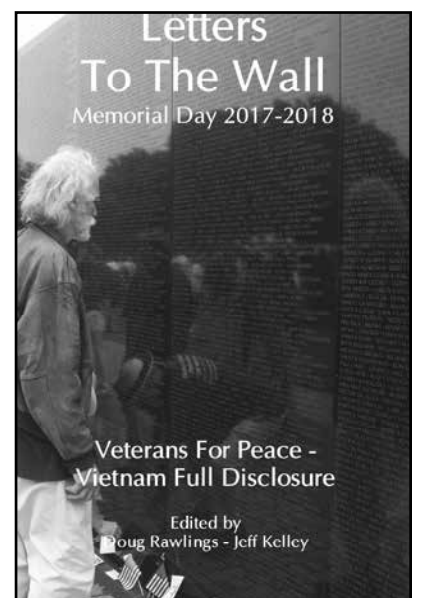
I would like to share with you a little more about our motherland Vietnam where you made the ultimate sacrifice. I understand it may be too late, but I want you to know of her. Because you were young when you were there, you may or may not know much of her and her beauty! "Mẹ Việt Nam" as we call her (mother Vietnam) is a unique, ancient, and beautiful land. It is so easy to fall in love with her and her children in her warm paradise on earth!

We are very proud and praiseful of our motherland for her intimate beauty. She brings us honor and courage, she gives us strength and tenacity so we are willing and ready to face and endure anything that comes our way. Therefore, we respect her with gratitude. Unfortunately, the land is too abundant and too strategically located for others to ignore, so she has been invaded and occupied many times. Throughout all the death and devastation caused by these incursions, the Vietnamese have maintained their spirit and love of their motherland.

When many of you as Americans came and tried so hard to occupy her, some of you fell in love with her while others came to hate her name, but that is part of human life on Earth! The ancient Vietnamese always referred to life as "âm" and "dương," complementary opposites of each other like man and woman, light and darkness, hard and soft, love and hate, war and peace, etc. That dualism in those symbolic characters exists in each of us. Positive actions will bring great harmony and spirit to the land no matter where you are coming from or where you are going or where you are laid to rest.

This year being the 50th anniversary (1968–2018) of the Tet offensive of 1968, many groups and individuals, myself included, have traveled from around the world to Vietnam to remember and honor the Vietnamese dead. There were ceremonies at the massacre sites in Son My village in Quang

Ngai province, where the My Lai massacre of March 16, 1968 occurred in central Vietnam and where the memory lingers of one of the darkest chapters of the war. While I was there I listened to the voices from the graves of the fallen soldiers and war victims from all over the country Mẹ Việt Nam.



# USS Liberty Survivor Joe Meadors Witnesses Israeli Violence Again

By Ann Wright

On June 8, 1967, U.S. Navy Signalman Joe Meadors was standing watch on the *USS Liberty* off the coast of Gaza. In an aerial and sea attack on the ship that lasted 90 minutes, the Israeli military killed 34 U.S. sailors and wounded 174. Signalman Meadors watched the Israeli military almost sink the ship, including Israeli forces machine-gunning lifeboats.

Fifty-one years later, on July 29, 2018, U.S. military veteran Joe Meadors witnessed another brutal Israeli military action, the violent takeover of the unarmed civilian ship *Al Awda* in international waters, 40 miles off Gaza. *Al Awda* was part of the four-boat 2018 Gaza Freedom Flotilla that began its voyage in mid-May from Scandinavia, and 75 days later arrived off the coast of Gaza. *Al Awda* arrived on July 29 followed by *Freedom* on Aug. 3. The two other boats of the flotilla, the *Files-tine* and *Mairead Maguire*, were unable to complete the voyage due to damage incurred during a storm off Sicily and maintenance problems.

Meadors said that on July 29, the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) appeared when the boat was 49 nautical miles off Gaza. He commented that there were six large patrol craft and four zodiac boats with storm troopers onboard. Meadors said one group of crew and passengers protected the pilot house. The IOF commandos beat the captain of the boat, hitting him and knocking his head against the sides of the ship and threatening him with execution if he did not restart the engine of the ship.

Four crew members and delegates were tasered by IOF forces. One crew member was repeatedly tasered on the head and neck and a delegate was also tasered repeatedly. Both were in serious medical condition after repeated tasering and were only semi-conscious during the seven-hour trip to the port of Ashdod in Israel.

Renowned orthopedic surgeon from the United Kingdom, Dr. Swee Ang, who is about 4 feet, 8 inches and weighs about 80 pounds was hit on the head and body and ended up with two broken ribs. Dr. Swee wrote:

“After a while the boat engine started. I was told later by Gerd who was able to hear Captain Herman tell the story to the Norwegian Consul in prison that the Israelis wanted Herman to start the engine, and threatened to kill him if he would not do so. But what they did not understand was that with this boat, once the engine stopped it



can only be restarted manually in the engine room in the cabin level below. Arne the engineer refused to restart the engine, so the Israelis brought Herman down and hit him in front of Arne making it clear that they will continue to hit Herman if Arne would not start the engine. Arne is 70 years old, and when he saw Herman's face went ash color, he gave in and started the engine manually. Gerd broke into tears when she was narrating this part of the story. The Israelis then took charge of the boat and drove it to Ashdod.

“Once the boat was on course, the Israeli soldiers brought Herman to the medical desk. I looked at Herman and saw that he was in great pain, silent but conscious, breathing spontaneously but shallow breathing. The Israeli Army doctor was trying to persuade Herman to take some medicine for pain. Herman was refusing the medicine. The Israeli doctor explained to me that what he was offering Herman was not army medicine but his personal medicine. He gave me the medicine from his hand so that I could check it. It was a small brown glass bottle and I figured that it was some kind of liquid morphine preparation probably the equivalent of oromorph or fentanyl. I asked Herman to take it and the doctor asked him to take 12 drops after which Herman was carried off and slumped on a mattress at the back of the deck. He was watched over by people around him and fell asleep. From my station I saw he was breathing better.”

## ‘Most Moral’

An Indigenous leader from Canada, Larry Commadore, was thrown to the deck and injured his foot when he requested to have his passport back as the passengers were being taken from the boat. He told The Real News Network that a few hours after his return to Givon prison, he developed bladder problems resulting from his injuries and had to be re-hospitalized as he could not pass urine. Prison guards did not believe he was injured and forced him to drink more water, which resulted in a worsened bladder. Commadore had to wait 10 hours for a doctor to come to the prison before being taken to the hospital for a catheter. He said he passed out several times during the procedure.

Several delegates were not given their prescribed daily medicines.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu describes the Israeli military as the most “moral” military in the world. Crew and delegates on *Al Awda* found that the Israeli commandos and military administrative staff and prison staff did not act morally.

Six delegates said that cash, credit cards, clothing, and personal items were taken from them and never returned.



An estimated \$4000 in cash and numerous credit cards were stolen. Delegates have cancelled their credit cards upon their return home and will be monitoring whether there are charges from July 29 onward, as happened in 2010 when Israeli soldiers reportedly used credit cards of passengers from the six ships of the 2010 Gaza Freedom Flotilla.

## ‘Freedom’ Stopped

Israeli commandos stopped *Freedom*, the second ship in the 2018 Gaza Freedom Flotilla, 40 miles off Gaza on Aug. 3. Twelve delegates and crew from five countries were taken to Givon prison. It's not clear whether the *Freedom* delegates were also abused. The Gaza Freedom Flotilla Coalition continues to demand that the State of Israel send to the Gazan people the \$15,000 worth of medical supplies, primarily gauze and sutures, in 116 boxes onboard *Al Awda* and *Freedom*.

Twelve national campaigns organized the 2018 Gaza Freedom Flotilla to bring bring not only much-needed aid, but also attention to the illegal Israeli blockade and repeated attacks on Gaza.

As Dr. Swee wrote on 21st Century Wire:

“In the week we were sailing to Gaza, they had shot dead seven Palestinians and wounded more than 90 with live bullets in Gaza. They had further shut down fuel and food to Gaza. Two million Palestinians in Gaza live without clean water, with only 2–4 hours of electricity, in homes destroyed by Israeli bombs, in a prison blockaded by land, air, and sea for 12 years.

“The hospitals of Gaza since March 30 had treated





more than 9,071 wounded persons, 4,348 shot by machine guns from a hundred Israeli snipers while they were mounting peaceful demonstrations inside the borders of Gaza on their own land. Most of the gunshot wounds were to the lower limbs and with depleted treatment facilities the limbs will suffer amputation. In this period more than 165 Palestinians had been shot dead by the same snipers, including medics and journalists, children and women.

“The chronic military blockade of Gaza has depleted the hospitals of all surgical and medical supplies. This massive attack on an unarmed Freedom Flotilla bringing friends and some medical relief is an attempt to crush all hope for Gaza.”

*Ann Wright served 29 years in the U.S. Army/Army Reserves and retired as a colonel. She was also a U.S. diplomat and was in U.S. Embassies in Nicaragua, Grenada, Somalia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Sierra Leone, Micronesia, Afghanistan, and Mongolia. She resigned from the government in March 2003 in opposition to the lies the Bush administration was stating as the rationale for the invasion, occupation, and destruction of Iraq. She is the co-author of Dissent: Voices of Conscience.*

**Clockwise from top: USS Liberty attack survivor Joe Meador, the Al Awda at dock in Cagliari, Italy, with eyes painted by Italian artist Jorit Agoch; Palestinian member of the Israeli parliament Aida Touma-Sliman addressing the Veterans For Peace convention in August; Freedom at anchor off Capri; Freedom at dock. Boat photos courtesy of Freedom Flotilla Coalition.**

# Palestinian Knesset Member Blasts New Israeli State Law in New York Synagogue

By Robert Herbst

In her first address in an American synagogue since becoming a member of the Israeli Knesset, Aida Touma-Sliman ripped into the new Jewish Nation State Law, which she said normalized discrimination and Jewish supremacy, and finally dispensed with equality as a normative value of Israel.

Handling a few hostile questions with aplomb, this inspiring Palestinian feminist, journalist, and politician won plaudits from the audience at Temple Israel of New Rochelle on Sunday evening, even as she told them that the passage of this Basic Law was “the first moment of the Israeli Apartheid regime.”

Born into a Christian Arab family in Nazareth, with a degree in psychology and Arabic literature from the University of Haifa, Touma-Sliman was a founder of the Arab feminist group Women Against Violence, working with battered women. Upon her election to the Knesset in 2015, she was the first female Arab MK appointed to chair a Knesset committee, the Committee on the Status of Women and Gender Equality.

She has two daughters, one of whom, she said Aug. 19, married a Dutchman. Her grandchildren, born in Israel, are automatic citizens of the Netherlands, but not citizens in Israel, where they were born and their mother was born. “I meet a lot of Jews back home who say we need a Jewish State as an insurance policy, in case something goes wrong,” she said. “But why should I pay the price of your insurance policy?” Israel, she said, takes on responsibility for Jewish citizens of other states and neglects its own non-Jewish citizens and residents. In the last 70 years, 700 Jewish settlements were built; 0 for Arabs. “We can’t buy houses in many of these settlements.” Under Article 7 of this new Basic Law, she said, development of Jewish settlements is a national value. “It is like saying, in the United States, that white development is a national value. Equality is no longer the value of the state.”

There is no mention, she noted, of “democracy” or “democratic” in the Basic Law, which “put an end to balance” between “Jewish” and “Democratic” in the description “Jewish and Democratic State” that Jewish Israelis often proudly ascribe to themselves.

Early in the question period that followed her talk, Touma-Sliman was confronted by a man who described himself as an American Jew whose family members went to the concentration camps. He asked why Palestinians “feel they have a right to gain something from the Israelis every time they lose a war?” Don’t the spoils belong to the victors?

Her answer: “If you mean, by Palestinians losing the wars, that nations or peoples who lose wars do not deserve to struggle and demand to live as human beings,



then you would have paid a very high price as Jews, because what happened to you as Jewish people should put you in a situation of more tolerance and more sympathy and understanding for the suffering of other people, especially when they are suffering under occupation.”

When asked about her own future in the Knesset, Touma-Sliman said that she and other Arabs may not be members for long, citing the Suspension Law which permits a member to be suspended if a majority of MKs vote to do so. “While the Supreme Court has put limits on the law, that court is changing, with three settlers with ultra-rightwing backgrounds” having been newly appointed to serve on the Supreme Court. She was referring to May 2018 decision unanimously upholding a July 2016 amendment to the Basic Law on the Knesset, allowing 90 lawmakers to remove a sitting member of the Knesset if they believe his or her actions incite racism or reflect support for armed struggle against the state or for a terror organization, but cautioning that “the expulsion authority” cannot be used “except in the most extreme of exceptional circumstances.”

Touma-Sliman was then asked about her views about the two-state solution. Since she was the first female member of the High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens of Israel, which in 2006 published a manifesto called “The Future Vision of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel,” which called for Israel to change from a Jewish state that privileges its Jewish majority into a state of all its citizens, it was surprising to hear her say that she now believes that, while the two-state solution is “fading out,” it is still preferable to the likely one-state solution that would continue to privilege Jews and discriminate against and oppress Palestinians. Yes, she said, the ideal would be a one-state solution that offers complete democracy, but the bad blood that afflicts the two peoples suggests that “the one-state solution will not be our dream,” as it will not provide “the right of self-determination that we believe in.”

Touma-Sliman has a lot to say, and leaves her listeners with a lot to think about. We need more Palestinian voices like hers speaking to more Jewish congregations, here and around the world.

*Robert Herbst is a civil rights lawyer. He was chapter coordinator for Westchester Jewish Voice for Peace from 2014 to 2017.*



# 'Today, I'm Just Going to Cry'

By Kristin Foss

RAMALLAH, Occupied West Bank—I woke up feeling sad today. I'm just so sad. I'm crying now, I started crying in the supermarket, I cried a little when a farmer refused my money for grapes. I think that today, I'm just going to cry. Maybe I need it.

Yesterday, I was called by a friend to ask if ISM [the International Solidarity Movement] could spare some people to come to a place I can't even remember the name of now. There are too many places, too much need for assistance. I wrote about it earlier though. Ras Karkar, the village is called. I remember now. The Israelis are going to build yet another illegal settlement there. Their village is already surrounded by three: in the north, in the south, in the

the United States did nothing. Palestinians remember her still, with respect and dignity, gratefulness and immense sadness. The Israelis make fun of her. Most Americans don't even know her name.

I've been reading comments that people have left in the comment sections of interviews with me, some say "third time lucky," or "if she is there knowing the risks it's her own fault, she deserved it," etc. Then I think of what these same people say about my Palestinian friends: that they are an invented people, there was never a place called Palestine. If a nurse gets killed tending to the wounded, she is Hamas. If a school or hospital gets bombed, then Hamas was storing weapons there. If a child is murdered, his parents are using him for sympathy. It's inexplicably inhumane. I have never witnessed anything

need to reconcile. I don't even know what that means. They say that dialogue is the only way, and the Palestinians have to reconcile. There is no dialogue here, it's all pretend. There is only violence, oppression, murder, land theft, and politicians keeping up the façade that there is dialogue, while the press helps keep this game of pretend going. The Palestinians must reconcile ... I think they mean that Palestinians must forgive and forget, get on their knees and hand over the keys they have left. I asked the representative for Norway what they meant with reconciliation—she did not know.

But there is another side. On this side there are the Palestinians, the people of this land, and some of us, international and Israeli activists who stand with them in solidarity. All we have is truth, dignity and humanity. We have this, but no power, unless everyone gets involved. Now, after getting shot twice, they talk about me, only because I'm a European woman—and thank god I videoed it. There are so many, just so many who would speak better than me, Palestinians, whose fate is incomparable to what happened to me. I'm a bit ashamed, but I will try to use it. If they all got the attention I got, would people care then? I would like to think so.

I still believe in humanity. I don't believe there is any left in Israeli politics, but there is enough in Palestine to make up for their lack, when Palestine is free. But where is the global humanity, where are all those who say that we must never forget? Don't ever forget, but don't ignore what is happening now, because this too will have a horrible end if people do not react. This is not a history lesson, this is today and this can be stopped, before it becomes another shameful period of human history. Palestine can still be free. This cannot go on, it cannot!

*Kristin Foss is an ISM volunteer who was shot twice in one week with rubber-coated steel bullets by Israeli soldiers in Kafr Qaddum. The first time she had her hands raised, along with another female ISM volunteer from Iceland, and the second time she was standing up against the wall of a shop.*



Kristin Foss.

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*This is not a history lesson, this is today and this can be stopped, before it becomes another shameful period of human history.*

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east—and now the Caterpillar machines and the soldiers have arrived to block the west; to build yet another illegal settlement, trapping the villagers. It's illegal according to international law of course. But, what is international law? It doesn't apply in Palestine. The Israelis know it; they've never had to comply. The United States has made sure of it, and the rest has accepted it.

The man who alerted me is my age; he has a professional job, a nice car. But he spends his free time alerting people, travelling to places where he is needed and getting beaten up by 20-year-olds with machine guns. He does not get to go home and have a nice dinner with his wife or play with his kids. I guess he could. But then, will his kids even have a country when they grow up?

A man who is sending me live videos is my dad's age. I've been watching the videos, videos of normal people, new friends I have not even met yet, although I recognize a few. Normal people, being brutally pushed over by young soldiers from God knows where, but from this land they are not.

I've watched videos of men trying to push heavy machines with their arms. I can feel the desperation. I want to be there. But today it's only me here and I can't go alone. I guess I could, but I don't dare today. I need a time-out. Maybe my fear is stronger than my solidarity. I don't want to die.

Rachel Corrie died. She was in ISM too. I don't think she could have imagined that they would actually do it. That they would run her over with a bulldozer, as she was visible to all, standing in front of it, but they did. They killed her with a bulldozer. Her solidarity was stronger than her fear. The Israelis got away with it. They got away with it, and they call her Saint Pancake. She was 23, and they ran her over with a bulldozer for trying to stop a house from being demolished. She was American, and

## Syria Attack in the Works?

Former British ambassador to Syria and Bahrain Peter Ford is warning that the United States, the U.K., and France may be planning to create pretext to invade Syria. Ford, who works on refugee issues at the United Nations and co-chairs the British Syrian Society, recently wrote a piece entitled "Is a Syrian Suez approaching?"

Ford recalls the Suez crisis: "The plan was for France, soon joined by the U.K., to invade Egypt on the pretext of safeguarding the Suez Canal, in hopes of precipitating the overthrow of President Gamal Abdel Nasser. The Tripartite Aggression, as the Arabs call it, was duly triggered on 29 October 1956, when Israel invaded."

He warns that a similar plan may be unfolding in Syria: "September 2018 is likely to witness another tripartite aggression based on pretexts and plotting, this time involving the U.S. alongside the U.K. and France. The victim now is Syria."

"The three governments in April staged a rehearsal for the upcoming performance, responding with bombing raids to the alleged use of chemical weapons in Douma. While Plan A for the raids involved heavy attacks on presidential offices and armed forces command and control centers, President Donald Trump was reportedly talked down from this by Secretary of Defense James Mattis, concerned by the prospect of possible clashes with Russia and risks to U.S. forces stationed in Syria. ...

"It is not necessary to rehash the mountain of evidence pointing to the probability that Douma was fabricated. Suffice to say that [Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons] inspectors, in their interim report presented on 6 July, stated that they had found no evidence that chemical weapons such as nerve agents had been used, and that the evidence for the use of chlorine as a weapon was inconclusive. ...

"Were there any doubt that skulduggery was afoot, it was removed by media reports, based on Russian statements and briefings, of the White Helmets being on maneuver in the vicinity of Jisr al-Shughur, and the transfer to a nearby village of canisters of chlorine, under the direction of English-speaking special forces or contractors.

"Simultaneously, reports appeared of the U.S. bolstering its naval presence in the Gulf and land forces in Iraq on the borders with Syria. Russia has moved more of its naval forces into Syrian territorial waters in response to the warning of imminent action, say reports.

"How could anybody ... believe a conspiracy theory like this, and from such tainted sources? Was it for a moment believable that the British or the Americans could be so duplicitous as to create for themselves a pretext to bomb a weak country in the Middle East? No need to go back as far as Suez to answer that; a quick recap of events in Iraq (weapons of mass destruction again) and Libya (baselessly alleged imminent massacres in Benghazi) would suffice."



A woman walks past a Jeremy Corbyn mural in Camden, London, on June 1, 2017. Photo: AP/Frank Augstein.

## Anti-Semitism Charges Against UK's Corbyn Are Diversion from Israeli Occupation of Palestine

By Miko Peled

LIVERPOOL, UK—Despite increasingly vicious attacks and spurious accusations of anti-Semitism, UK Labour Party head Jeremy Corbyn, true to himself and his principles, has stayed above the mud-slinging and continued to fight for the principles to which he has dedicated his entire life. He focuses on issues like social justice; caring for the many rather than the few, the millions not the millionaires; and, as Corbyn himself said in his speech at last year's convention, “end[ing] the oppression of the Palestinian people.”

Zionist groups within the Labour Party, which include Labour Friends of Israel (LFI) and the Zionist Jewish Labour Movement (JLM), skillfully utilize the pro-Zionist media. They are trying—and failing—to paint Jeremy Corbyn as an anti-Semite. However, the problem is not anti-Semitism but Corbyn's stance on Palestine. These Zionist groups want to get rid of Corbyn because of his principled stance on Palestine, Israeli colonialism and occupation of Palestine, and they use anti-Semitism labels because they think it will work.

### The 1972 Munich Attacks Issue

The desperation of those seeking to oust Corbyn can be seen by the latest accusation against him: attending a memorial for terrorists.

It was given impetus by a remark by the Israeli prime minister, in what is a shocking intervention by Israel in British politics. Benjamin Netanyahu made remarks about the Labour leader, saying that he deserves “unequivocal condemnation.” In what can only be described as an escalation of the already heavy-handed intervention of Zionist groups to end Jeremy Corbyn's leadership, Netanyahu said that Corbyn's participation in a ceremony

at a cemetery in Tunis in 2014 is deserving of condemnation, because—according to Netanyahu—terrorists are buried there.

Corbyn did not remain silent. He struck back, reminding Netanyahu that what is deserving of condemnation is Israeli forces' killing of hundreds of protesters in Gaza and the passing of the new, racist Israel Nation State Law.

Netanyahu—along with what may well be the loudest Zionist mouthpiece in Britain, *The Daily Mail*—claims that Corbyn was present at a ceremony and even laid a wreath on the graves of terrorists connected with the 1972 attack on the Israeli athletes during the Munich Olympic games.

The truth of the matter is that the event in which Corbyn participated had nothing to do with the Munich attack. In 2014 Jeremy Corbyn attended a service at a cemetery in Tunis commemorating the victims of the 1985 Israeli airstrike on the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) offices in Tunis. This Israeli attack was a breach of international law, violated the sovereignty of another country, and received worldwide condemnation, including by the United States.

Furthermore, none of the eight men who participated in the Munich attack are buried in Tunis. The four men who are buried there—and whose tombstones are shown in *The Daily Mail* photo—are Salah Khalaf, who was Yasser Arafat's deputy; his aide, Fakhri al-Omari; Hayel Abdel-Hamid, who was the PLO chief of security; and Atef Bseiso. Bseiso was assassinated in Paris in 1992—20 years after the Munich Olympics. He was heavily involved in talks with the CIA in an attempt to advance relations between the United States and the PLO. Israel claimed that all four were involved in the attack in Munich and had all of them assassinated either directly or

*continued on page 20 ...*

## Shame on You, America

By Gideon Levy

Now it's out in the open: America has declared war on the Palestinians. With his son-in-law Jared Kushner, an expert on humanitarian organizations and Palestinian refugees, the great bully Donald Trump decided to end aid to the U.N. agency that aids Palestinian refugees. The official explanation: The business model and fiscal practices of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency made it an “irredeemably flawed operation.”

Trump and his son-in-law, the keepers of the seal of good government, found that the agency isn't properly run. The annual U.S. contribution of \$360 million will end. Even in Israel, which rejoices at every Palestinian calamity and is positive that everything is a zero-sum game, people think the state's greatest friend of all time went a little overboard.

The new America treats small slights and major crimes equally. Allocations to U.S. aid organizations operating in the territories, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development, have been cut by \$200 million.

Washington decided to hit the Palestinians in the wallet. Of all the huge sums going to aid corrupt regimes, of all the trillions spent on pointless wars and mass killing, it's the aid to the Jabalya refugee camp that's mismanaged and has to stop. The Palestinians, blackmailing sons of blackmailers, no longer deserve it because of the business model. It would be funny if it weren't so sad; the price of the joke will be paid from Chatila to Rafah.

In the next decade, the United States is set to pour \$38 billion into Israel, among the most developed countries on the planet with one of the best-equipped armies in the world—which of course follows the right business model.

This year, America will spend \$46 billion in Afghanistan, on a war it can't get enough of. It will pour \$13 billion into Iraq, long after one of the most foolish wars ever ended.

Wars? The one in Afghanistan cost America \$753 billion, the one in Iraq \$770 billion, according to the Pentagon. Two unnecessary wars that caused the needless deaths of hundreds of thousands of people, but the money spent on them conformed with a proper business model. The same for the wars in Syria and Yemen.

Only the U.N. relief agency for the Palestinians is improperly run. The leader of the free world, the greatest warmonger since World War II, cuts flour for Yarmouk and cooking oil for Bureij, because the Palestinians overestimate refugee numbers.

Behind all this, of course, is a much broader truth. UNRWA could hire Eliad Shraga, head of the Movement for Quality Government in Israel, and comply with Scandinavian management standards, but nothing would make a difference. Israel long ago declared war on the agency, America followed it as usual, all with the aim of removing the refugee issue from the agenda.

Anyone familiar with the conditions in the refugee camps knows just how dependent their inhabitants are on the U.N. agency. There might be some waste, certainly there are freeloaders, reform is absolutely necessary, but UNRWA provides basic humanitarian assistance. Without it there are no schools, clinics and food in the camps. America owes an indirect debt to the people there; it funds and supports the Israeli occupation, and it has never lifted a finger to reach a genuine solution to their suffering.

But the new America has lost its shame, too; it no longer even wants to pretend to be the honest broker, or take care of the world's needy, as its position obliges it to do. Let us say, then, shame on you, America.

*Gideon Levy is an Israeli journalist and author. His opinion pieces and weekly column for the newspaper Haaretz often focus on the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.*

# Ireland

... continued from page 1

nent” exercises that last indefinitely, maintain an ongoing U.S. military presence around the world for a price tag of at least \$100 billion a year.

Why they do this is a harder question to answer, but when Trump, of all people, vaguely gestured toward the remote possibility of allowing peace and reunification in Korea, the U.S. Congress immediately and indignantly jumped in to save us all from such a calamity, forbidding the removal of U.S. troops from Korea.

Even if you think there is some reason to be able to quickly deploy thousands of U.S. troops to any spot on earth, airplanes now make that as easily done from the United States as from Korea or Japan or Germany or Italy or Diego Garcia. That’s clearly not a complete explanation of the motives behind U.S. base world.

The bases, in many cases, generate an enormous amount of popular resentment and hatred, serving as motivations for attacks on the bases themselves or elsewhere—famously including the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Bases around the borders of Russia and China are generating new hostility and arms races, and even proposals by Russia and China to open foreign bases of their own. Currently all non-U.S. foreign bases in the world total no more than 30, with most of those belonging to close U.S. allies, and not a single one of them being in or anywhere near the United States, which would of course be considered an outrage.

Many U.S. bases are hosted by brutal dictatorships. An academic study has identified a strong U.S. tendency to defend dictatorships where the United States has bases. A glance at a newspaper will tell you the same.

The smaller bases that don’t house tens of thousands of troops, but secretive death squads or drones, also have a tendency to make wars more likely. The drone war on Yemen that was labeled a success by President Obama has helped fuel a larger war.

The U.S. government’s pursuit of domination and conquest once drove it to build bases in Native Americans’ lands, and now in many other places referred to as “Indian territory.” In the 20th century, U.S. imperialism went global. When FDR visited Pearl Harbor (not actually part of the United States) on July 28, 1934, the Japanese military expressed apprehension. General Kunishiga Tanaka wrote in the *Japan Advertiser*, objecting to the build-up of the American fleet and the creation of additional bases in Alaska and the Aleutian Islands (also not part of the United States): “Such insolent behavior makes us most suspicious. It makes us think a major disturbance is purposely being encouraged in the Pacific. This is greatly regretted.”

Then, in March 1935, Roosevelt bestowed Wake Island on the U.S. Navy and gave Pan Am Airways a permit to build runways on Wake Island, Midway Island, and Guam. Japanese military commanders announced that they were disturbed



and viewed these runways as a threat. So did peace activists in the United States. By the next month, Roosevelt had planned war games and maneuvers near the Aleutian Islands and Midway Island. By the following month, peace activists were marching in New York advocating friendship with Japan. Norman Thomas wrote in 1935: “The Man from Mars who saw how men suffered in the last war and how frantically they are preparing for the next war, which they know will be worse, would come to the conclusion that he was looking at the denizens of a lunatic asylum.” The Japanese attacked Wake Island four days after attacking Pearl Harbor.

Supposedly World War II has ended. Why have the troops never come home? Why have they continued to spread their forts into “Indian Territory,” until the

disaster area surrounding U.S. bases has continued to this day, despite the decision in 1945 to start sending families to live with soldiers—a policy that now includes shipping each soldier’s entire worldly possessions including automobiles around the world with them, not to mention providing single-payer healthcare and twice the spending on schooling as the national average back home. Prostitutes serving U.S. bases in South Korea and elsewhere are often virtually slaves. The Philippines, which has had U.S. “help” as long as anyone, provides the most contractor staff for U.S. bases, cooking, cleaning, and everything else—as well as likely the most prostitutes imported into other countries, such as South Korea.

The most isolated and lawless base sites include locations from which the

refugees on other islands without means of support or a social structure in place. In the coming years, the United States would remove 147 people from Enewetak Atoll and all the people on Lib Island. U.S. atomic and hydrogen bomb testing rendered various depopulated and still-populated islands uninhabitable, leading to further displacements. Up through the 1960s, the U.S. military displaced hundreds of people from Kwajalein Atoll. A super-densely populated ghetto was created on Ebeye.

On Vieques, off Puerto Rico, the U.S. Navy displaced thousands of inhabitants between 1941 and 1947 and announced plans to evict the remaining 8,000 in 1961, but was forced to back off and—in 2003—to stop bombing the island. On nearby Culebra, the Navy displaced thousands between 1948 and 1950 and attempted to remove those remaining up through the 1970s. The Navy is right now looking at the island of Pagan as a possible replacement for Vieques, the population already having been removed by a volcanic eruption. Of course, any possibility of return would be greatly diminished.

Beginning during World War II but continuing right through the 1950s, the U.S. military displaced a quarter million Okinawans, or half the population, from their land, forcing people into refugee camps and shipping thousands of them off to Bolivia—where land and money were promised but not delivered.

In 1953, the United States made a deal with Denmark to remove 150 Inughuit people from Thule, Greenland, giving them four days to get out or face bulldozers. They are being denied the right to return.

Between 1968 and 1973, the United States and Great Britain exiled all 1,500 to 2,000 inhabitants of Diego Garcia, rounding people up and forcing them onto boats while killing their dogs in a gas cham-

continued on page 18 ...

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*The smaller bases that don't house tens of thousands of troops, but secretive death squads or drones, also have a tendency to make wars more likely.*

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United States has more foreign bases than any other empire in history, even as the era of conquering territory has largely ended, even as a significant segment of the population has ceased thinking of “Indians” and other foreigners as subhuman beasts without rights worthy of respecting?

One reason, well documented by David Vine in his book *Base Nation*, is the same reason that the huge U.S. base at Guantanamo, Cuba, is used to imprison people without trials. By preparing for wars in foreign locations, the United States is often able to evade all kinds of legal restrictions—including on labor and the environment, not to mention prostitution. GIs occupying Germany referred to rape as “liberating a blonde,” and the sexual

U.S. military evicted the local population. These include bases in Diego Garcia, Greenland, Alaska, Hawaii, Panama, Puerto Rico, the Marshall Islands, Guam, the Philippines, Okinawa, and South Korea—with people evicted as recently as 2006 in South Korea.

During World War II the U.S. Navy seized the small Hawaiian island of Koho'alawe for a weapons testing range and ordered its inhabitants to leave. The island has been devastated. In 1942, the U.S. Navy displaced Aleutian Islanders. President Harry Truman made up his mind that the 170 native inhabitants of Bikini Atoll had no right to their island in 1946. He had them evicted in February and March of 1946, and dumped as

# U.S. Leaders Aid and Abet War Crimes in Yemen

By Marjorie Cohn

U.S. leaders who provided military support to the Saudi-led coalition that bombed civilians in Yemen this August could be charged with aiding and abetting the commission of war crimes under customary international law, which is part of U.S. law.

The 500-pound laser-guided MK 82 bomb that the coalition dropped on Aug. 9 killed 51 people, including 40 children. The bombing constituted a war crime.

“They came to the hospital in cars and ambulances. Dozens of children with an array of grisly wounds,” Marta Rivas Blanco, a nurse from the International Committee of the Red Cross who works at the Al Talh hospital, wrote in the *Guardian*. “Some were screaming, some were scared, many went straight to the morgue.”

Lockheed Martin, one of the leading U.S. military contractors, manufactured the bomb, which was part of a U.S.-Saudi arms deal last year.

## Aiding and Abetting a War Crime

According to customary international law, aiding and abetting a war crime requires three elements: 1) a person or entity committed a war crime; 2) another actor committed an act that had a substantial effect on the commission of the war crime; and 3) the other actor knew that the act would assist, or have a substantial likelihood of assisting, the commission of the war crime. All three of those elements were present in the Aug. 9 bombing.

First, the coalition committed a war crime. Willful killing and the targeting of civilians constitute grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Targeting a busload of children in a busy marketplace is a war crime.

Second, U.S. leaders provided the means to commit the war crime. The purchase of the bomb was part of an arms deal with Saudi Arabia that the U.S. State Department sanctioned.

Third, the U.S. military knew that supplying the bomb to the coalition was likely to result in the commission of a war crime. A similar bomb killed 155 people in a funeral hall in Yemen in October 2016.

After the 2016 bombing, the Obama administration, citing “human rights concerns,” banned the sale to Saudi Arabia of precision-guided military technology. That ban was reversed the same month Trump made his \$110 billion arms deal with the Saudi king in Riyadh, and the U.S. government reauthorized the provision of laser-guided munitions to Saudi Arabia.

The Aug. 9 school bus bombing was one of over 50 airstrikes on civilian vehicles by the coalition so far in 2018.

On April 23, 2018, Saudi aircraft dropped cluster bombs made by Ray-

theon on a wedding in Yemen, killing 22 people, including children. When they explode, cluster bombs scatter tiny bomblets. Some remain unexploded and detonate when people accidentally step on them or children pick them up off the ground. These weapons are banned by the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which prohibits all use, stockpiling, production and transfer of cluster munitions.

The Saudi war on Yemen could not continue without support from the United States and the United Kingdom.

U.S. military assistance to the coalition includes in-air refueling of Saudi and United Arab Emirates aircraft, logistical support, and intelligence sharing. U.S. involvement in the war escalated late last year when a team of Green Berets secretly arrived at the border between Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

At least 6,385 civilians have been killed and 10,000 injured since the war began. Airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition account for over 60 percent of the civilian casualties.

Yemen has one of the world’s largest humanitarian crises. At least 22.2 million people—and nearly all Yemeni children—need humanitarian aid, and it is suspected that more than 1 million people have cholera. Nevertheless, the coalition restricts aid and imports of food, medicine and fuel.

## Congress Condemns U.S. Role in Yemen

The U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed a non-binding resolution in November 2017 calling on U.S. military forces to withdraw from “unauthorized hostilities” in Yemen. It stated

that U.S. military aid to the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen was not sanctioned by prior congressional authorizations. The resolution condemned the targeting of civilians and urged all parties to “increase efforts to adopt all necessary and appropriate measures to prevent civilian casualties and increase humanitarian access.”

On Aug. 13, 2018, Trump signed the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which contains an allocation of \$717 billion for the U.S. military. In that legislation, Congress included several provisions to achieve accountability for U.S. support of the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen.

Section 1274 directs the Defense Department to conduct a review of whether U.S. or Saudi coalition forces in Yemen are violating U.S. or international law.

But when Trump signed the bill, he at-

tempted to evade the humanitarian crisis; undertaking demonstrable actions to reduce the risk of harm to civilians; complying with laws regarding military purchases from the United States; and taking appropriate steps to avoid disproportionate harm to civilians.

Trump also attached a signing statement to that provision, saying any certification that section 1290 purported to require would have to be “consistent with the President’s constitutional authorities as Commander in Chief and as the sole representative of the Nation in foreign affairs.”

The bottom line is that Congress must immediately end all U.S. involvement in the war in Yemen and refuse to appropriate funding for arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the UAE while they continue bombing and blockading Yemen.

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*Yemen has one of the world’s largest humanitarian crises. At least 22.2 million people—and nearly all Yemeni children—need humanitarian aid, and it is suspected that more than 1 million people have cholera. Nevertheless, the coalition restricts aid and imports of food, medicine and fuel.*

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tached a signing statement saying his administration would treat the provisions of section 1274 “consistent with the President’s constitutional authority to withhold information, the disclosure of which could impair national security, foreign relations, law enforcement, or the performance of the President’s constitutional duties.”

Section 1290 requires the secretary of state to certify that Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates are making good faith efforts to end the civil war in Yemen; taking appropriate measures to al-

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Marjorie Cohn is professor emerita at Thomas Jefferson School of Law, former president of the National Lawyers Guild, deputy secretary general of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers and an advisory board member of Veterans For Peace. An updated edition of her book, *Drones and Targeted Killing: Legal, Moral, and Geopolitical Issues*, was recently published.



People stand near a bus destroyed by an airstrike that killed dozens of children on Aug. 9, 2018, in Saada, Yemen.

Photo: Mohammed Hamoud/Getty Images

## Grizzlies

... continued from page 4

the underlying philosophy and concepts that made these places possible in the first place. The Wilderness, Endangered Species, and Antiquities acts are all under siege. The NRA and Safari Club agendas on wildlife and wilderness issues are driven by the desire to dismantle our wild heritage.

I've spent time with Yellowstone's grizzlies each year for the past five decades, beginning in 1968. The first 15 years were the most intense, during which time I filmed bears full-time in the Yellowstone and Glacier National Park ecosystems. Typically, I'd spend the first six weeks of spring in Yellowstone, and then come

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*Throw in some colonial dominion over the beasts, a little Hemingway, and you find a tremendous amount of masculine bullshit.*

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back for October. The rest of the season, I filmed in Glacier and worked seasonal jobs for the park service.

Much of the time, I worked alone, lugging camera gear around in a backpack, camping in the backcountry for stretches of up to a couple weeks at a time.

My strategy for finding grizzlies in Yellowstone was split between two general approaches: I could go out into good spring habitat, find a set of fresh bear tracks and follow them to where the grizzly was feeding. Sometimes, this took days of tracking to catch up with the bear. Compared with today, grizzlies were scarce in Yellowstone during the '70s—something everyone agrees on.

The other, more efficient strategy was to set up on a hill or promontory where



**Orphaned grizzly whose mother was killed by a hunter. Photo: Horsefeathers Photography by Brad Orsted, [horsefeathersphotography.com](http://horsefeathersphotography.com).**

bears were likely to come by and just wait. It helped if there were winter-killed elk or bison carcasses nearby.

Using such methods, spread over three decades, I managed to sneak up on at least 200 unsuspecting grizzlies in and around Yellowstone and Glacier parks, to distances within about one hundred yards. Most of those approached were captured on film, which is now archived at Texas Tech.

Here I want to say something about hunting. I don't think dispatching brown bears with a weapon capable of bringing down a B-52 is very challenging. Because I could have shot any of those bears, I have always suspected grizzlies are easy to hunt. Easy, say, compared to black bears, who are spooky forest creatures and a test

for a fair chase (no baits or dogs) hunter. Grizzlies, by contrast, are open country animals and their dominance at the top of the food chain means they don't automatically run away.

Here is a crucial distinction between me and trophy hunters. I don't hunt predators. I wouldn't shoot a bear for a cool million.

### Trophy Hunting

How do you justify killing an innocent animal of exceptional carriage that you don't intend to eat and who poses no threat to you? A few trophy hunters try to answer this question; most see no problem, they kill the big grizzly or the lion with a huge mane just because they can.

They may trophy hunt because it runs in the family. Or because male archetypes like Teddy Roosevelt did it.

Throw in some colonial dominion over the beasts, a little Hemingway, and you find a tremendous amount of masculine bullshit in consideration of what constitutes an "authentic" experience in outdoor blood sports.

For the record, I do hunt, mostly game birds and the occasional deer. I eat what I kill and have many guns. I don't hunt predators on principal or trophy-sized animals. Each year as I grow older, I find myself backing off a bit.

Despite a few female members, groups like the Safari Club are rooted in masculine institutions of patriarchy and clan-ship. Within the fraternal organization, intense competition abounds. If your buddy bags a huge kudu or leopard head, you'd better get a bigger one.

My own feeling is that the time for these ceremonial executions is over. We lost our authenticity somewhere in the colonial past. We don't need a Yellowstone grizzly hunt.

The year 2018 finds us much deeper into the climate change game than anyone wants to talk about and also smack dab in the early middle of the Sixth Great Extinction. The first critters to go in a great extinction tend to be the big ones, especially the large rare mammals favored by trophy hunters. This endangered species list does not exclude two-legged primates; the hot winds of change are coming for us all.

Doug Peacock is Vietnam War veteran, naturalist, and author. He is best known for his memoir *Grizzly Years: In Search of the American Wilderness*.

## Ireland

... continued from page 16

ber and seizing possession of their entire homeland for the use of the U.S. military.

The South Korean government, which evicted people for U.S. base expansion on the mainland in 2006, has, at the behest of the U.S. Navy, in recent years been devastating a village, its coast, and 130 acres of farmland on Jeju Island in order to build another massive base for U.S. use.

In hundreds of other sites where the population was not evicted, it might wish it had been. Foreign bases have been environmentally disastrous. Open-air burns, unexploded weaponry, poisons leaked into the ground water—these are all commonplace. A jet fuel leak at Kirkland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, N.M., started in 1953 and

was discovered in 1999, and was more than twice the size of the Exxon Valdez spill. U.S. bases within the United States have been environmentally devastating, but not on the scale of those in some foreign lands. A plane taking off from Diego Garcia to bomb Afghanistan in 2001 crashed and sank to the bottom of the ocean with some 8,500 pounds of munitions. Even ordinary base life takes a toll; U.S. troops produce over three times the garbage each as local residents in, for example, Okinawa.

Disregard for people and the land and the sea is built into the very idea of foreign bases. The United States would never tolerate another nation's base within its borders, yet imposes them on Okinawans, South Koreans, Italians, Filipinos, Iraqis, and others despite huge protest.

Countries have rid themselves of U.S. bases in the past. Many desperately need to

do so now, and we in the United States need them to. The U.S. government's mania for world domination hurts us as well as those whose lands are occupied. The upcoming gathering in Dublin will be an effort to unite people across borders in resistance to a rogue state that needs to be brought into the world of law and nonviolent community.

*For more information on the International Conference Against U.S./NATO Bases, go to [nousnatobases.org](http://nousnatobases.org).*

*David Swanson is an author, activist, journalist, and radio host. He is director of World Beyond War and campaign coordinator for Roots Action. Swanson's books include War Is A Lie. He blogs at [DavidSwanson.org](http://DavidSwanson.org) and [WarIsACrime.org](http://WarIsACrime.org). He hosts Talk Nation Radio. He is a 2015, 2016, and 2017 Nobel Peace Prize Nominee.*

# They Risked Everything to Fight the Nazis

By David Broder

Arsène Tchakarian was the last surviving member of a Communist military unit in the French Resistance. Mainly Jews and immigrants, they risked everything to fight the Nazi occupation.

Arsène Tchakarian, who died Aug. 4 at age 101, was the last surviving member of the “Groupe Manouchian,” a military unit active in the French Resistance. Named after its leader Missak Manouchian, this Communist network mainly composed of Jews and immigrants carried out numerous armed attacks on the German occupation forces. Twenty-three of its members were executed and three others killed in action. Tchakarian and his comrades fought both as Communists and in defense of their adoptive homeland.

## An Immigrant Communist

The Manouchian group in which Tchakarian fought was part of the “Immigrant [or Foreign] Workforce” (MOI) partisan formation attached to the Communist-led Francs-Tireurs et Partisans (FTP). He, like Manouchian, was an Armenian, born in 1916 to a family escaping the genocide in the Ottoman Empire. Having arrived in France as a teenager in 1930 using a Nansen refugee’s passport, he soon became active in the General Confederation of Labor (CGT). He met the Communist poet Manouchian as early as 1933, during efforts to raise famine relief for their native Armenia.

The MOI’s history began long before the war. Already in 1924 the Communist-led CGT formed a special organization for the foreign workforce, which adopted the name MOI in 1932. With French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Russian, and Yiddish-speaking sections, the MOI was also key to mobilizing French-based communists to fight in the Spanish Civil War. Migrants whose own countries had fallen to fascism played an especially prominent role in the International Brigades’ fight against Francisco Franco.

As France entered the war in September 1939 and the government dissolved the Communist Party, many members of the MOI headed into the underground. Like its foreign counterparts, the party adopted a line condemning both sides of the war as imperialist, breaking with its robust Popular Front-era positions emphasizing antifascism and national defence. As a conscript soldier in the Ardennes, Tchakarian did, however, fight against the German advance, before France collapsed in May–June 1940.

Returning to Paris after being demobilized that August, Tchakarian found what he called “an empty city. You saw nothing but German tanks and trucks on the Champs-Élysées. People were shaking. The curtains were shut. Everyone had left.” At first there were few signs of resistance. But having resumed contact with Manouchian, by November 1940, Tchakarian had begun to produce clandestine propaganda against both the German occupier and the

collaborationist Vichy regime.

Communist resistance activity in the first months of occupation was scattered: not only were party structures weak but the political line adopted in September 1939 (in accordance with the Soviet Union’s peace deal with Nazi Germany) tended to place the two sides in the war on an equal footing. Nonetheless, Communists were among the first to begin Resistance activity on French soil, conducting numerous armed attacks and industrial sabotage and leading a miners’ strike even before the June 1941 German invasion of the Soviet Union.

## The Manouchian Group

In fact, the Allies were already parachuting weapons into France, an arsenal bolstered by weapons stolen from the collaborationists and Germans. Tchakarian’s own first use of arms took place on March 17, 1943, as 19-year-old Polish Jew Marcel Rajman directed him together with Manouchian in a grenade attack on 20 German military police at Levallois-Perret. In June, Tchakarian became leader of one of the “commando triangles,” uniting the different Resistance forces organized as the “Secret Army,” while Manouchian

including Manouchian and Rajman, were shot at the Forteresse du Mont-Valérien on February 21, 1944.

Tchakarian was saved by a former regimental comrade, a policeman who kept him in a Paris hideout. In May he was exfiltrated from the capital to Bordeaux, before heading to the town of Montargis, 70 miles south of Paris, in June. Appointed a lieutenant, he helped liberate Montargis at the head of a group of 20 fighters on August 23, 1944, occupying the German headquarters that had been set up in the Post Office.



**Eight members of the French Communist urban guerrilla resistance unit ‘The Missak Manouchian Group,’ including their Armenian-born leader Missak Manouchian (1906–1944) (third from left in line, second from left in photo), stand before a wall as they await execution after their capture by German occupation forces, Fort Mont Valerian, Paris, Feb. 21, 1944.**

This latter development nonetheless added urgency to Communist resistance movements, which also drew strength from the first signs that, unlike France, the Soviet Union would not just roll over in the face of the German onslaught. In March 1942, the tide of the war had already started to turn after the successful Soviet defense of Moscow, and the FTP-MOI formed an armed group in Paris under the leadership of the Romanian Communist Boris Holban.

Linked to this organization through Manouchian, the leader of its Armenian section, Tchakarian soon made the turn to armed activity. As he recalled, “[Up until] that point our resistance had been a matter of distributing leaflets and talking a bit about politics. But one day in 1942 Manouchian came to the tailor’s workshop I was working in and told me, ‘We’ve had enough leaflets. Now we need to fight with weapons.’” “Missak,” Tchakarian replied, “How are we going to do that? We do not have any weapons.”

took over the Paris FTP-MOI leadership from Holban.

Its more than 100 operations over summer and autumn 1943 targeted the key leaders of the Occupation infrastructure, also raising awareness of its existence. An abortive attempt to assassinate General Ernst von Schaumburg, commander of the Greater Paris region, on July 28, 1943 highlighted the danger the Manouchian group posed to the authorities, as did the September 28 killing of SS man Julius Ritter, chief of the STO organization which recruited forced labor for German war industry.

However, even as the Resistance struck such blows, it suffered deadly repression. Intelligence had already been tracking the Manouchian group, leaving it untouched in order to draw information on its networks. But finally, the trap was sprung. On November 16, two dozen members (around a third of the total) were arrested; all but one was condemned to death. Twenty-two of Tchakarian’s comrades,

## Fallen for France

The FTP-MOI’s activity was particularly notable because it organized specifically immigrant groups in a French national cause. On trial a few days before his execution, the young Manouchian had admirably faced down insults from collaborationists in the public gallery with his famous cry: “You inherited French nationality, we earned it!” Nazi propaganda instead sought to use the presence of foreigners in the Resistance to present it as an alien force, driven by the international Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy.

The existence of the MOI, rooted in an earlier history of migrant unionism, reflected both France’s multinational working class and the presence therein of foreign nationals whose countries had fallen to authoritarian and antisemitic regimes even before the war. Indeed, of 23 executed members, only three were French: the others included seven Polish Jews (and another Pole), three Hungarian Jews,

*continued on page 20 ...*

## Fighting Nazis

... continued from page 19

one Romanian Jew, five Italians (one of Armenian origin), two other Armenians, and a Spaniard.

This was advertised by the Nazis themselves, in the infamous Affiche Rouge (“Red Poster”) posted on walls around France after the executions at the Fort de Mont-Valérien. It showed 10 of the executed men (including six Jews) with such epithets as “Polish Jew—13 attacks” or “Spanish Red—seven attacks”). The poster, printed in some 15,000 copies in a large 120 x 80 cm format, combined the images of death and destruction at the hands of this “Army of Crime” with the question in block capitals: “Are these liberators?”

A leaflet issued simultaneously presented even the French members of the group as mere patsies for a foreign interest. It proclaimed, “If Frenchmen pillage, steal, sabotage and kill. ... It is always foreigners who command them. It is always professional criminals and unemployed who carry out their orders. It is always Jews who inspire them. This is the Army of Crime against France. Banditry expresses not a wounded Patriotism but the foreign plot against the lives of the French and France’s sovereignty.

Around France these Nazi posters

were themselves the subject of a Resistance response. Many were daubed with the words “Fallen for France.” As with Manouchian during his trial, Tchakarian would long insist on the patriotic nature of the cause in which he fought: “I may well have been a little Armenian immigrant, but I had suffered the occupation just like everyone else. I was cold, I was hungry, and I’d been at the front in 1939. I was a tough one. I fought more for France than some French people did.”

Nonetheless, the Communist Party’s need to assert its patriotic credentials in the face of Cold War claims that it fought for a Russian and not French interest meant that postwar party press often overlooked the FTP-MOI’s specific record. In more recent decades, as part of the ideological offensive against the party, revisionist historians even made lurid claims that its leadership had deliberately destroyed the “embarrassing” Manouchian group; a narrative that lifelong Communist Tchakarian strongly denied.

Indeed, already in the early postwar period there was recognition of Tchakarian personally (who became a French citizen in 1958) and the Manouchian group more widely. In 1947 a medal of the Resistance was conferred on its members; in 1950 Paul Éluard devoted a poem to the “23 foreign terrorists tortured and shot by the Germans,” and this was followed by a 1955 work by Louis Aragon (in 1959 be-



**Arsène Tchakarian (with cane) in 2012 was awarded the French Legion of Honor. In 2017 he was given the rank of Commander of the Legion of Honor, France’s highest award.**

coming a Léo Ferry ballad), published on the front page of the Communist Party’s daily L’Humanité.

A member of the historical group devoted to the killings at the Forteresse du Mont-Valérien, Tchakarian also upheld this memory in a series of historical works. He explained that as long as he lived, he would be a living witness to his comrades’ extraordinary contribution to the anti-Nazi Resistance. As he put it, “It’s part of the history of France—the

history of how in a capital city like Paris, riffraff like us could shoot down Germans in broad daylight. And if I hadn’t been there, I could hardly believe it either.”

Arsène Tchakarian, tailor, historian, Communist, and commander of the Légion d’Honneur, died aged 101 on August 4, 2018.

*David Broder is a historian of French and Italian communism. He is currently writing a book on the crisis of Italian democracy in the post-Cold War period.*

## Jeremy Corbyn

... continued from page 15

by the proxy terror group, Abu-Nidal. There was never a shred of proof, not to mention a trial, to substantiate Israel’s allegations against these men.

### Blatant Intervention

The big question is why does the Israeli prime minister feel he needs to engage in such blatant intervention and make such blatantly false accusations just as Britain’s largest political party is about to convene? Netanyahu and his henchmen must realize that UK Labour, having gained over half a million members since Jeremy Corbyn’s ascent as leader, is poised to win in the next elections, so that, if Israel fails to oust him, Jeremy Corbyn will end up in 10 Downing Street.

One of the ridiculous charges laid against Corbyn is the following: He was criticized for attending a passover Seder with a particular group of Jewish people who “dismissed concerns about anti-Semitism in the party.” So it is not good enough that he went to a Seder and that he opted to do so among people who live in his own constituency; he had to do so with Jewish people who think a particular way.

Corbyn was also criticized for participating in an event with the late Hajo Meyer, a Jewish Holocaust survivor himself. This was in 2010, when Corbyn hosted a Holocaust Memorial Day event in London with Meyer as the main speaker. Hajo Meyer was, like many Holocaust survivors, a fervent advocate for Palestinian rights and a severe critic of Israel—hence the criticism.

Another sticking point is the self-appointed International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), which apparently adopted a new and, in their own words, “non-legally binding” working definition of anti-Semitism. Initially Labour’s national executive committee refused to accept this definition, but there are signs that a compromise might be on the horizon. This definition of anti-Semitism is one that entire Jewish communities do not

accept because it seeks to silence criticism of Israel and conflates Zionism with Judaism. The anti-Semitism definition includes several clauses that have nothing to do with racism or anti-Semitism and have everything to do with protecting Israel from criticism. For example:

- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination; e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.

### War of Attrition

Another example, in which I was personally involved, has to do with a comment that I made at a fringe event during the 2017 Labour conference and that turned into a major news item. During a panel on free speech, I said that free speech means we should be able to discuss ev-

*By trying to silence the discussion regarding Zionism and its legitimacy, Israel abuses the memory of the millions who died in the Holocaust, particularly the Jewish victims.*

ery issue, including Palestine and the Holocaust. *The Daily Mail* published this as though it was a scandalous thing to say and accused Labour and even Corbyn himself for allowing it to happen.

Every other newspaper in Britain followed suit and then papers in Palestine and even the Israeli papers picked it up as well. I added in my remarks that, while free speech should not be criminalized, we do not need to give a platform to proponents of any racist ideology, and that includes Zionists who regularly demand to be present and give their perspective at events and lectures.

My presence during the conference and my comments did not warrant such attention. However, this is a war of attrition in which Labour Friends of Israel, the so-called Jewish Labour Movement, and the British Daily Mail are leading the charge and will jump at every opportunity to get attention. Once again, the problem was not denial of the Holocaust or anti-Semitism—because there was no expression of either one—but the fear of a discussion on Palestine and Zionism.

By trying to silence the discussion regarding Zionism and its legitimacy, Israel abuses the memory of the millions who died in the Holocaust, particularly the Jewish victims. There are entire communities of Jewish Holocaust survivors and descendants of survivors who are quite ready to discuss and debate any issue, including the Holocaust, and who view the Zionists’ stance as absurd. These same Jewish communities also reject Zionism and support the Palestinian call for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) against Israel. It is time that these voices be heard.

After a career marked more by his appearance at peace marches and union rallies than speeches in Parliament, Jeremy Corbyn, the bearded 68-year-old who promotes “the socialism of the 21st century,” is trying to overcome skepticism about his leadership in a national election that will determine how the country exits the European Union.

Jeremy Corbyn is a man who has dedicated his entire life to fighting racism and injustice—he is not a racist and therefore clearly he is not anti-Semitic. He has not once denied the Holocaust and therefore he is not a Holocaust-denier. However, none of this matters. As was stated clearly in *The Daily Mail*, “The Board of Deputies of British Jews warned Mr. Corbyn to ‘come out of hiding’ and said the anti-Semitism crisis would not go away.” In other words, there is nothing he can say or do to “clear” himself. They are determined to oust him and they think the anti-Semitic card will do the trick.

*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.*

# Is Climate the Worst Casualty of War?

*If we don't get serious about stopping the U.S. war machine, we could lose the biggest battle of our lives.*

**By Stacy Bannerman**

How do you clear a room of climate activists? Start talking about war. It's not just environmentalists that leave. It's pretty much everyone. Mission accomplished by the Bush administration, which sent the military and their families to war and the rest of the country to an amusement park.

The military-civilian divide has been called an "epidemic of disconnection." But the biosphere doesn't see uniforms, and the environmental devastation caused by bombs, burn pits, and depleted uranium cannot be contained within a combat zone. We haven't counted the massive carbon footprint of America's endless wars, because military emissions abroad have a blanket exemption from both national reporting requirements and the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change. There will be no exemptions in the coming climate collapse. We've all got skin in the war game now.

Religious communities are mobilizing on behalf of the healing and protection of the planet. But with few exceptions, such as Martin Luther King Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign resurrected by a trio of ministers, the topic of America's literal war on the world is still off the table. Although Pope Francis knows creation is God's cathedral, he spent only a handful of words on the ecology of war in the beautifully rendered *"Laudato Si: On Care For Our Common Home."* And the big environmental organizations seem to have agreed that the U.S. military is the entity we won't talk about when we talk about the biggest contributors to climate change.

The Pentagon uses more petroleum per day than the aggregate consumption of 175 countries (out of 210 in the world) and

still haven't left, so the U.S. invasion and 15 years of occupation likely has generated upward of 400 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e to date. The money misspent on that war—a war for oil, let's not forget—could have purchased the planetary conversion to renewable energy. Just sit with that for a moment. Then stand up and get back to work, please.

We've got wind farms to build and pipelines to stop. We've got solar panels to install and water to protect. We need torchbearers from every tribe and nation to walk the green path and light the Eighth Fire. But to do so while continuing to feed the fossil-fueled military beast chewing up nearly 60 percent of the national budget is energy inefficient and environmentally self-defeating. We cannot cure this manmade cancer on the climate without

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*We cannot cure this manmade cancer on the climate without addressing underlying causes.*

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generates more than 70 percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, based on rankings in the CIA *World Factbook*. "The U.S. Air Force burns through 2.4 billion gallons of jet fuel a year, all of it derived from oil," reported an article in *Scientific*

addressing underlying causes. In order to achieve the massive systemic and cultural transformations required for mitigating climate change and advancing climate justice, we're going to have to deal with the socially sanctioned, institutionalized violence per-

their families. (So much for supporting the troops.)

We have to replace the flawed patriotism that has us clinging to the idea that we can't win without war (all evidence to the contrary) with a bipartisan paradigm devoted to liberty and justice and freedom for all, so that creating an intelligent, muscular peace becomes a national priority. If we do not, we will never become the America we have said that we are.

In the end, what we haven't included in the cost of war may end up costing the most.

We cannot continue the moral, spiritual, fiscal, or environmental policy of benign neglect that underwrites the decimation of land, air, and water around the world. That, my green friends, is the single most unsustainable policy on this nation's books.

I know a lot of folks have decided not to speak out about war in order to avoid being labeled traitors, or accused of being anti-military. If we learn nothing else from the Iraq war—and it seems we have not—we learn that silence is a luxury we cannot afford when lives are on the line. The hands of the Doomsday Clock are at two minutes to midnight. Life itself is on the line. It is time to find your voice.

We have to defrock the sacred cow grazing at the Pentagon, because climate may be the worst casualty of all. My whole existence was a casualty of the Iraq War, and too many of my friends have gotten a



**Veterans For Peace making the connection between militarism and climate change at the People's Climate March in September 2014. Photo: Ellen Davidson**

The cost of America's post-9/11 wars is approaching \$6 trillion, and the price tag will continue to climb right along with sea levels, temperatures, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, and methane, a potent greenhouse gas. We can look forward to an escalation in global food insecurity, climate refugees, and the release of long-dormant, potentially lethal bacteria and viruses. Research published in the journal *Pediatrics* in May 2018 revealed that "children are estimated to bear 88 [percent] of the burden of disease related to climate change." Nevertheless, public health agencies don't discuss what war costs our climate when they discuss what climate change will cost our children.

*American*. Since the start of the post-9/11 wars, U.S. military fuel consumption has averaged about 144 million barrels annually. That figure doesn't include fuel used by coalition forces and military contractors or the massive amount of fossil fuels burned in weapons manufacturing.

According to Steve Kretzmann, director of Oil Change International, "The Iraq war was responsible for at least 141 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e) from March 2003 through December 2007." That's more CO<sub>2</sub>e than 60 percent of all countries, and those figures are only from the first four years. We downsized the war in December 2011, but

petrated by U.S. foreign policy that is pouring fuel on the fire of global warming.

The Department of Defense (DoD) has the largest carbon footprint of any enterprise on the planet. The DoD is the single greatest manufacturer and disseminator of tools and toxins like Agent Orange and nuclear waste that are destructive to ecosystems. Nearly 70 percent of U.S. environmental disasters the EPA classifies as Superfund sites have been caused by the Pentagon, which is a primary polluter of U.S. waterways. It should be no surprise, then, that at least 126 military bases have contaminated water, causing cancer and birth defects in service members and

Gold Star. I don't use the word "casualty" lightly. When I tell you the pain of losing everything you love because of war is a pain you do not want, I beg you to believe me. We have to keep working to "keep it in the ground," but if we don't get serious about stopping the U.S. war machine, we could lose the biggest battle of our lives.

*Stacy Bannerman is the founder of Women's EcoPeace and the author of Homefront 911: How Families of Veterans Are Wounded by Our Wars. She has testified before Congress three times, spearheaded the passage of two bills, and was a charter board member of Military Families Speak Out. Her website is stacybannerman.com.*

# Take a Knee

... continued from page 10

liberty, such as it is. Not a single one of those countries ever once threatened to attack, let alone actually attacked, the United States.

Some may claim that the invasion of Afghanistan was a justifiable act of “defense” because of the 9/11 attacks. But that claim fails on several grounds. Even if one accepts the official story that Osama Bin Laden was responsible for the attack and was being harbored in Afghanistan, that does not justify invading an entire country, overthrowing its government, and occupying it for 17 years in order to arrest the perpetrator and his supporters. Such claims ignore the fact that the Taliban government offered to turn over Bin Laden if the United States had simply produced evidence that he was responsible for 9/11, but the Bush administration refused the offer, deliberately choosing invasion over a peaceful solution. Such claims also ignore the fact that the invasion of Afghanistan was planned well before 9/11, and was motivated by the Taliban’s failure to cooperate with the U.S. ruling class’ desire to build a pipeline to transport oil from Central Asia and the

Caspian region, across western Afghanistan and Pakistan to the Indian Ocean.

Like all the other wars listed above, those who “risked their lives” were not fighting to defend freedom and liberty. They were used to fight wars of conquest, to assert U.S. control of other nation’s resources, markets, sources of cheap labor, and strategic territories that would facilitate access to the wealth of other nations. Proof of this in each and every instance is beyond the scope of the present article, but I will return to that subject in the future. For now, it will suffice to point out that none of the nations attacked by the United States since World War II ever once threatened to attack the United States or threatened its “freedom and liberty.” The claim is simply a lie, and it is not made any more true by its frequent repetition. That is not the fault of the people who fought in those wars; they were used a pawns by a ruling class and its political agents, both Democratic and Republican, who repeatedly sent them into wars fought for the sake of profit and wealth accumulation, not defense of freedom and liberty.

Yes, our freedoms are under attack, but they are under attack from the same national security state and powerful executive branch that misuses our military

by sending it overseas to fight for oil, resources, and profits for the wealthy owners of U.S. corporations and banks, a national security state that spies on us, assassinates and tortures people, persecutes whistleblowers, infiltrates the media, manufactures consent for war, and repeatedly lies to the American people. They are under attack from a Congress that rammed through the USA PATRIOT Act within weeks of the 9/11 attacks, and that, just last January, supported by leading Democrats like Nancy Pelosi and Adam Schiff, passed a bill to give the Trump administration greater authority to spy on Americans, immigrants, journalists, dissidents, and everyone else.

To me, the shameful U.S. record of conducting aggressive wars of conquest that have nothing to do with defense of freedom and everything to do with the accumulation of wealth and profit is all the more reason to take a knee every time the national anthem is played. It is every bit as shameful as our failure to address the problem of racist police violence. I will not express my “pride” in being a member of a nation that acts as an international outlaw.

In all candor, I am not a big fan of “patriotic” displays in the first place. In my view, national chauvinism—this raw

sentiment that you are supposed to cheer for your country, no matter how criminal or horrible its government’s actions may be—is an attitude to be resisted, not embraced. As George Bernard Shaw famously wrote: “Patriotism is your conviction that this country is superior to all other countries because you were born in it.”

The social convention of standing for the national anthem is not the action of a people celebrating freedom and liberty. To the contrary, it smacks of regimentation and group-think, using peer pressure to get everyone to agree that your particular nation-state is the best—not because it actually is, but because you are told to believe it and are threatened with ostracism, verbal abuse or worse if you don’t go along with the crowd. I align myself with Albert Einstein and Eugene V. Debs when it comes to the question of patriotism. As Debs well put it: “In every age it has been the tyrant, the oppressor and the exploiter who has wrapped himself in the cloak of patriotism, or religion, or both to deceive and overawe the People.”

*Rich Whitney is an attorney, disk jockey, environmental and peace activist, and current Green Party candidate for County Board in Jackson County, Ill.*



# Inside Iran

... continued from page 24

a subject that interests you. Medea’s delivery will make it clear, with endnotes if you want to delve deeper.

Take “The Paradoxical Status of Iranian Women.” The marriage age before the 1979 revolution was 15, but after the revolution it was lowered to puberty. Several years later it was raised to 13; however a father can ask permission to marry off his daughter at a younger age. Yet the average marriage age for women in 2016 was 24. This chapter also tells us being a woman athlete “offers opportunities for Iranian women to travel abroad, but women do require permission from a male relative, such as a father or husband.”

“The Struggle for Human Rights in Iran” includes subsections on Iranians’ rights under the shah; rights recognized by the Iranian government; freedom of speech, association, and assembly; imprisonment of foreigners and Iranians with dual nationality; the judicial system; prison conditions and torture; the death penalty; and

execution of juveniles. (In 2015, Iran’s death row held 160 juveniles.)

In “Social Deviance: Gays, Prostitutes, Drugs and Alcohol,” Medea tells us homosexuality can be a capital crime, while at the same time the government subsidizes transgender surgery. And prostitution is illegal, but the Ministry of Health has established drop-in centers for female sex workers to get STD checks and medical treatment.

The chapter “Religious Freedom, for Some” is interesting. Medea explains why the Saudis are Sunni and speak Arabic, while the Iranians are Shia and speak Farsi, and we learn that Iran is also home to Christians, Zoroastrians, and Jews, groups known as “People of the Book.”

The last half of the book presents the story of the Pahlavi monarchy that ruled from 1925 to 1979, transforming the economy from agrarian to industrial, manufacturing, and oil production, and also reports on the corruption and the fortune accrued by the royal family and its 63 princes and princesses. Their solution to poverty was to bulldoze shantytowns.

The revolutionaries of 1979 espoused the objectives of equality and social jus-

tice. There has been success and failure. Life expectancy has risen from 53 to 75, a good thing. But 60 percent of the economy is in the hands of the government, a situation that has never done well anywhere. And the sanctions that followed the takeover of the U.S. Embassy, the 444-day hostage situation, and the increased sanctions after the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, have played well for no one.

The Supreme Leader has the final word on most of what goes on. If someone wants to run for political office, his candidacy needs the Supreme Leader’s okay. Still the presidency has a great deal of power, and the swing of liberal and conservative presidents has been enough to give the electorate whiplash. Women’s permitted attire in public is a stark example of that.

A French carmaker that controlled 30 percent of the Iran market pulled out in 2011 because of international sanctions. The easing of restrictions with the 2016 nuclear agreement has the company committed to investing hundreds of millions into manufacturing cars in Iran. However, during the sanctions China grabbed most of the car market, as it did many

other Western-sanctioned businesses.

“Chapter 8: Iran’s Relationships with U.S. and the West” may be what the reader came to the book for. Don’t jump to it. What Medea presents to this point illuminates our understanding of what we are told in the final 70 pages. A hint? Oil. The democratically elected government that had reduced the shah to a figurehead also nationalized the oilfields. That government was overthrown in 1953 by our CIA and the shah was elevated again to head of state. Our relationship with the government of Iran went downhill from there.

*Inside Iran* should be read widely. Particularly, it should be read by the people in our government and military who are most dangerously involved in demonizing the Iranian people. Get a copy of *Inside Iran* (preferably through your local independent bookseller, although it is available online), read it, and send it to your congressperson’s assistant for veterans and military affairs.

*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.*

Photo: Ellen Davidson



# The Ups and Downs of 'White Privilege'

By Howard Machtinger

The concept of white privilege helps white people grasp the depth and pervasiveness of racism in American culture and society. For starters, let's be clear about what the concept entails and what it doesn't. White privilege has both material and psychological components. It confers wealth benefits, but also serves as a balm for "fragile" white egos.

White privilege is being perceived as normal; being considered a real American; thinking one is color blind; not having to think about race; not needing to have The Talk about how to survive an encounter with the police; being criticized and not having to wonder if it's related to race; believing hard work will yield success; believing one has a seat at the table; benefiting from government programs while stigmatizing them; having easier access to credit, education, housing, and jobs; being the beneficiary of historical wealth disparities; a continuing gap between White wealth and Black wealth.

White privilege is not necessarily White people escaping suffering in their lives; being automatically richer or more successful than people of color (White people with privilege can be poor too); freedom from oppression.

"Whiteness" is a form of "property," providing access to myriad forms of power. White privilege as a concept effectively communicates racism's centrality and ubiquity in our lives. It infuses and distorts interracial interactions. Further, it highlights and helps explain an extremely effective mechanism of social control. Exposing, understanding, and recognizing this mechanism can enable Whites to engage in needed internal reflection concerning control issues, arrogance, and the inability and/or unwillingness to hear/understand/appreciate the voices of People of Color.

But understanding white privilege does not serve as an all-purpose concept. Partially because it critiques white consciousness so effectively, it may not necessarily aid in providing an incentive for Whites to be active in the struggle against racism. Since racial privilege is so pervasive and fundamental, the struggle against racism can be expected to entail real risk for all people, whites included.

How does understanding the concept of white privilege contribute to the motivation of White people to engage in such a daunting struggle?

If Whites partake in the struggle against racism only as an act of moral virtue or even atonement for the unearned benefits they have gained from a destructive and divisive privilege, they miss the larger issue and miss

opportunities to expose the illusions of white privilege altogether, to make the argument that we are all harmed by the toxicity of racism and have a common interest in dismantling it.

White privilege is both real and illusory. It is used as a mechanism to keep potential allies apart and to wed non-elite White people to those in power. Privilege has to be real enough to have a chance of winning over significant numbers of White people, but not so real that the power of the political, corporate, and financial elites—those who dole out the privilege—might actually be threatened. The strategy behind white privilege is to construct difference so as to suppress and divide potential opposition.

Privilege assumes two advantaged groups: the privilege provider and the privilege receiver. How privilege is doled out through our institutions is a subject for another essay, but it is obvious that what is given can be taken away by those in control.

To move beyond just essential moral concerns, it may be useful to employ a concept from critical race theory, "interest convergence." As stated by Warren J. Blumenfeld in the Huffington Post, "The late Dr. Derrick Bell of New York University Law School forwarded the theory of 'interest convergence,' meaning that white people will support racial justice only when they understand and see that there is something in it for them, when there is a 'convergence' between the interests of white people and racial justice." If properly conceived, the interests of non-elite White people and People of Color will converge—moving beyond alliances of momentary convenience to a more profound connection in overcoming a system bent on disempowering both.

When the powers that be are doing well, they can be more generous in material white privilege provision—witness the post World War II period of economic expansion where many Whites were afforded the privilege of suburban life and GI bill access to higher education.

When matters are more challenging to the powers that be—as with the decline in U.S. global power beginning in its defeat in Vietnam—then privilege begins to assume less material and more illusory psychological forms. Real wages stagnate; deindustrialization accelerates; the welfare state is disassembled; social inequality is magnified. People of Color are disproportionately affected, but Whites are less insulated and increasingly vulnerable to these indices of decline. The material wage of whiteness is increasingly replaced by a more evanescent, if still powerful, wage based on psychological messaging from politicians and mass media.

"Whiteness" becomes more public, generating a community based on resentment rife with barely repressed as well as more open violence. Many Whites fret about becoming a "minority" group in the near future. This is not a happy way of life. As economic desperation increases, previously marginalized white supremacist groups enter the mainstream egged on by a egocentric, white-nationalist President.

While such white anxiety maintains and fortifies the distance between racial groups, the symptoms of oppression that people face tend to cross racial boundaries, especially for those not part of the elite. Environmental, health, and infrastructure problems cannot be easily confined to the "ghetto." Drug addiction comes to undermine White, as well as Black and Latinx communities. Whites, also, are sacrificed in failed imperial wars and suffer PTSD in their aftermath. They also suffer from foreclosures, loss of health benefits and of food stamps, and a generally diminishing social welfare. The suffering of people of color can be the canary in the coal mine, a signal that the longterm negative consequences of social inequality have come to the fore.

Numerous studies demonstrate the relationship between economic equality and social satisfaction. Non-elite people perceive growing inequality as unfair and as undermining their hope for social mobility. But when inequality is in large part racialized, many Whites resent affirmative attempts to address racial inequality, fearing that such attempts undermine their privilege. White society becomes less trusting and more fearful. The society as a whole becomes more militarized to protect some and control others. Racist violence becomes increasingly normalized whether by the state or by non-state actors.

The future will play out in one of two ways. Either white resentment at presumed loss of status will dominate, morphing into American-style "fascism"—for lack of a better term to describe a dangerous racist authoritarianism—or alternatively, an authentic alliance against racist, authoritarian capitalism can be created.

There is desperation in the white panic that buttresses Trump. Moving beyond "dog whistles" to a strident bullhorn is belligerent, but also betrays weakness. The manipulative psychology of white privilege is both more aggressive and also more vulnerable. Progressive society has an opportunity to articulate a vision and develop a practice of a common interest in social transformation—social transformation that is truly antiracist, as well as antisexist, and one that benefits most people, including Whites, by creating a caring, trusting, truly democratic and just society.

To have a chance at a just future, we need to find ways to push back against the raging tides of racism that have driven our nation's history and are now re-emerging in stridently blatant forms. Trump seems eager to run on his exclusionary policies in an attempt to invigorate a white, Christian, male-dominated America.

We are called upon to offer a compelling alternative, powerful enough to halt this dangerous trajectory. To effectively counter Trump's open white nationalism, it is imperative to untangle the contradictions surrounding white privilege—to understand the centrality of race in our society so that the change we call for will be antiracist, upending a deeply entrenched system of white supremacy, while at the same time expose the illusory nature of white privilege, contending with its temptations as we expose the flimflam at its core.

*This article was originally published on portside.com.*

*Howard Machtinger was a representative of Students for Democratic Society (SDS) at the second session of the Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal in Copenhagen in 1967, which included testimony (including from U.S. soldiers) about the use of torture by U.S. personnel in Viet Nam and the uses and dangers of Agent Orange. After the war, he helped found the Viet Nam Support Committee in Seattle in the hope that Americans would not abandon postwar Viet Nam.*

# Leave No Trace: A Case Study of the Scars of Betrayal

*Leave No Trace*

Directed by Debra Granik, Written by Debra Granik and Anne Rosellini. Bleecker Street Studio, 2018

**By Sam Coleman**

Debra Granik's superbly constructed *Leave No Trace* follows Will, a veteran of America's current wars, and his 13-or-so-year-old daughter Tom, through developments that shatter their attempts to live off the land in a semi-survivalist lifestyle surrounded by Oregon public forest. The premise of the film is Will's intense need to minimize contact with other people and Tom's equally intense need to cleave to her father. The attentive viewer will see that, despite his impressive adaptations to the wild, Will is no naturalist, and he is a man of very few words so you won't hear any soliloquies from him about his plight. It's not just his reaction to helicopter noise, a newspaper article on Marines' suicides squirreled away among his papers, or his rejection of cell phones and TV sets that will cue you in to his stress: whenever dealing with anyone other than his daughter, his face pinches up as if from a pain that just won't go away, and he has to squeeze each word out of his mouth.

*Leave No Trace* is not another depiction of timeless bonds between parent and child. The movie is getting well-deserved praise from reviewers, but as a test of their knowledge of veterans' emotional prob-

lems, most of them have flunked. They and any other viewers unfamiliar with the psychological problems of U.S. veterans will leave the theater largely clueless about Will's back story. The film's present-day setting means that Will was deployed to Iraq and/or Afghanistan and/or any of the seven or so other places that we have sent soldiers for combat roles in recent years—and probably in multiple deployments at that. Granik wisely rejected the hackneyed device of the combat flashback scene, giving us the space to consider causes of psychological damage far broader than “the” PTSD-inducing incident—a pathetically stunted explanation of the devils that beset our veterans.

We can sum up every veteran's emotional injuries in one word: betrayal. Betrayal by politicians who condemn our service members to military campaigns that prop up corrupt regimes. Betrayal by venal careerist superiors and opportunists in the chain of command. Betrayal by members of an American public who've either salved their guilt about veterans with cheap gestures like magnetic ribbons, or who have forgotten our soldiers entirely. Betrayal by the local people in far-off lands who are supposed to be grateful to the U.S. military but who provide “bad intel,” help plant roadside bombs, and plan ambushes after nightfall. These betrayals gnaw away at any validation our combat soldiers may feel for their immense personal sacrifices, among them the deaths of battle buddies and exposure



*Debra Granik's characters' worlds are circumscribed by the aftermath of war.*

to brutal climates. But most fearfully injurious of all is betrayal of the self for taking part in atrocities. When all of those betrayals boil over, it can result in actions that the soldier later intensely regrets.

Is it any wonder that Will wants to leave the world? Or that our soldiers have experienced so much pain that they seek other escape hatches, from alcohol to suicide? Clinicians are finally discussing these collective insults to the soul under the rubric of “moral injury.” Their discourse is still halting and informal, though. Progress in defining etiology and treatment is glacial, because our mainstream mental health community refuses to peer into the ugly truths of our wars.

A no-spoilers review severely limits what I can write about healing. Whether this movie's immediate outcome is happy or sad, however, we should think about Tom. What's in the future for her, with or without her father? Not much. She's bright and quietly assertive. Her father's tutelage

has given her a head start in education, and her affinity for the creatures around her, from rabbits to bee colonies, hints at a career in veterinary medicine or entomology that would reward her intelligence and maturity. Had she been living in Oregon a few decades ago, she could realize a dream like that, but today's withered public sector, drained by perpetual war and financial shenanigans at the highest level of policy, leaves Tom and everyone else her age undereducated or at the mercy of a pay-to-play educational system. And we are all the poorer because that door to career fulfillment is closed to her.

Ultimately, no review can do justice to the viewing experience. See this movie. Then vow to help stop the crazy military machine that keeps churning out this kind of suffering.

*Sam Coleman, PhD, MSW, is a lecturer at California State University Long Beach and the coordinator of the Veterans For Peace PTSD Working Group.*

## A Clear Exposition of a Complex History

*Inside Iran: The Real History and Politics of the Islamic Republic of Iran*

By Medea Benjamin  
OR Books, 256 pages, 2018

**By Denny Riley**

If you've been lucky enough to hear Medea Benjamin speak, you know she is full of blazing truth. She can stand in front of a hundred people and give them everything they want to know about the topic she came to speak on, and give it to them with fire in her belly, without pause or entertaining aside. The facts and details she shares could come from some speakers in a somnambulant voice, but Medea delivers them as something between a startling story of outrage and a direct order to grab the truth and do something about it. And she delivers her talks without notes.

Fortunately, she sometimes does take notes. She is a curious person who can look deeply into an issue and come up with a book. A recent result of her keen intellect is *Inside Iran: The Real History and Politics of the Islamic Republic of Iran*. The book delivers a broad and understandable, though rich and detailed, account of the people and land toward which so many in America feel



*Medea Benjamin speaks on Iran at the Veterans For Peace convention. Photo: Ellen Davidson.*

hostility. Medea has been to Iran twice and both times found the citizenry generous and warm. The book is written to enlighten us on the humanity of these people and this ancient land that some persons of power in our government would like us to bomb, along with the causes of the current situation.

Medea writes in a clean, uncomplicated manner about a history rife with complications. Such as in 539 BC, when Iran was

known as Persia and extended from the Indus River in the east to the Aegean Sea in the west and down to Libya and Egypt. Cyrus the Great set slaves free and declared religious freedom for everyone and equal opportunity for all races. He had these basic rights inscribed on a barrel-shaped baked-clay tablet that still exists, known as the Cyrus Cylinder. Twenty-five hundred years later they were trans-

lated by the United Nations into all six official languages and are the basis of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

For the people in Iran, that's all ancient history. As Medea writes, “Iran today, unfortunately, is no bastion of freedom.” My reading of her book leaves me with the impression the problem has come (as such problems usually do) from a succession of greedy and solipsistic leaders and foreign countries that thought they knew best. Alliances with the British, the Russians, and the French never really had an advantage for the Persians. In the 1870s, Persian leaders made almost unbelievable economic deals with foreign powers “to pay back debts they had accumulated, in part because of their extravagant lifestyles.” They granted “a series of enormous economic concessions to British interests. The first, in 1872, was known as the Reuters Concession. It handed to Baron Julius de Reuter control over the nation's roads, telegraphs, mills, factories, mineral extraction, forests, and public works.” In 1890, British businessman Major G.F. Talbot was granted control of the production, sale, and export of tobacco. In 1901, Iran's rulers signed over exclusive oil-drilling rights to British businessman William D'Arcy. Hard to imagine.

*Inside Iran* is written in 10 chapters, each one crisp and powerful. Many of the chapters can stand alone. Pick one with

*continued on page 22 ...*