

Dedicated to Abolishing War, Establishing Justice, and Fighting Climate Disaster
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'Outright Betrayal of Veterans'

*They lied us into wars—
now they're lying about
taking care of us*

By Jessica Corbett

President Donald Trump and billionaire Elon Musk's sweeping effort to gut the federal government includes cutting up to 83,000 jobs at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

VA Chief of Staff Christopher Syrek's memo to top staff was first reported on March 4 by Government Executive.

"The forthcoming cuts will be sweeping and spare no part of the department," Syrek said. Over a quarter of department employees are veterans.

U.S. House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Chair Mike Bost (R-Ill.) said in a statement that "I have questions about the impact these reductions and discussions could have on the delivery of services." The panel's ranking member, Mark Takano (D-Calif.), was far more critical.

"This deliberate dismantling of VA's workforce by firing an additional 80,000 employees isn't just dangerous—it's an outright betrayal of veterans," said Takano. He warned that a return to the staffing level before the Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act, 2022 legislation to help those exposed to burn pits, "will cripple the very system that millions of veterans rely on, denying them access to lifesaving healthcare,"

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Photo: Ellen Davidson

Surrendering to Authoritarianism

*Liberal institutions,
including universities,
traditionally surrender
without a fight to the dictates
of autocrats. Ours are no
exception.*

By Chris Hedges

I was not surprised when Columbia University's interim President Katrina Armstrong caved to the demands of the Trump Administration. She agreed to ban face masks or face coverings, prohibit protests in academic buildings and create an internal security force of 36 New York City Police officers empowered to "remove individuals from campus and/or arrest them when appropriate." She has also surrendered the autonomy of academic departments, as demanded by the Trump Administration, by appointing a new senior vice provost to "review" the university's department of Middle East, South Asian and African Studies and the Center for Palestine Studies.

Elite universities such as Harvard, Princeton, Columbia or Yale, were created to train and per-

petuate the plutocracy. They cloak themselves in the veneer of moral probity and intellectualism but cravenly serve political and economic power.

Armstrong, like most of the heads of our universities, is fruitlessly humiliating herself. She would, I expect, happily make space on her office wall to hang an oversized portrait of the president. But what she does not know, and what history has taught us, is that no appeasement is sufficient with autocrats. [Indeed, since this article was written, President Armstrong resigned from her position and was replaced by a member of the university's board of trustees.]

The Department of Education has warned 60 colleges and universities that they could face "potential enforcement actions," if they do not comply with federal civil rights law that protects students from discrimination based on race or nationality, which includes antisemitism. Columbia, stripped of \$400 million in federal grants, is desperately trying to restore the funding. I doubt it will work. Those mounting these assaults against universities intend to turn them into indoctrination machines. The so-called campaign against antisemitism is simply a cynical tool being used to achieve that end.

These institutions of privilege—I attended Harvard and have taught at Columbia and Princeton—
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Stomp of Approval
by Mr. Fish

From the Editors

Forty Years Ago

Musings from my mid-70s: Forty years ago in my late 30s, I was in the midst of an MVP season with the Red Sox, while scoring 40 points a game for the Celtics, and occasionally suiting up for the Bruins as their star goalie. Unfortunately, mainstream media was determined to downplay the accomplishments of an antiwar veteran, so none of these exploits was caught on film or immortalized in print.

Which gets me to this point in time—older now, living in somewhat comfortable retirement in rural Maine and reflecting on aspects of my past that actually did happen and were chronicled by others. There were many significant events that can be verified beyond mere personal musings. Here's something, for example, a short chronicle of a small gathering some 40 years ago that has influenced my

was destined to become a national (now global) organization composed of veterans and allies dedicated to abolishing war through nonviolent means. Six of us living in Maine. Five veterans and Judy, who was not a vet but whose input and influence was essential. Forty years have passed and thousands of veterans and their loved ones have joined us from around this country and from six other nations. We also have NGO status at the United Nations. But my purpose is not to outline all the amazing things accomplished by veterans and others working for peace and justice over these past four decades. Rather, I'll just share a few personal reflections as the last remaining member of that original group at Denny's.

We five military veterans were upset (aggrieved is a better word) by our country's military aggression in Central America in the mid-1980s. We saw the Viet Nam War being replayed again and again and it tormented us. Two of us



George Mizo, Duncan Murphy, Charlie Liteky, Brian Willson.

free of unnecessary wars. We were quick to point out that we were not anti-military as such; we were rather opposed to the violent use of men and women as a means for politicians and corporations to satisfy their warped agendas. If there were a need to protect our loved ones, we would be there. As Pete Seeger sang in 1969, "If an army invaded this land of mine/You'd find me out on the firing line/Bring them home, bring them home."

Our first significant excursion out of the state of Maine was to Washington, DC, in 1986 to support four veterans holding a 40-day, water-only "Fast for Life" in opposition to the wars in Central America. We were seen off by the governor of the state, Joseph E. Brennan, born of Irish immigrants, raised in a tenement, and who was also a brother U.S. Army veteran.

Those protesting fasting veterans were George Mizo, Duncan Murphy, Charlie Liteky and Brian Willson.

George Mizo, a Viet Nam War vet-

eran, was instrumental in 1992 founding and developing the Friendship Village in Vietnam, created to provide support for Vietnamese exposed to Agent Orange. It is still serving children and adults affected by that toxic herbicide (for more, see vietnamfriendship.org).

Duncan Murphy was a WWII conscientious objector who nevertheless served in North Africa as an ambulance driver and was with British troops when they liberated Bergen Belsen, the infamous Nazi concentration camp where Anne Frank died. During the fast, Murphy said, "I worked with survivors of the Nazi atrocities after the Army unit I was with liberated Belsen ... The Jews, Gypsies, and other prisoners there told me the same kinds of stories I've heard from survivors of Contra atrocities during my trips to Nicaragua. For over 40 years, I have done everything I possibly could to prevent the horrors of the Holocaust from recurring."

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We offered veterans a means to use their military experiences for a positive aspiration—a world for their children free of unnecessary wars.

life (and countless others) ever since.

Jerry Genesio writes in *Veterans For Peace: The First Decade*: "In March, Judy [Genesio] and I [Jerry Genesio] contacted Gerry Amelotte, Willard Bicket, Ken Perkins and Doug Rawlings to schedule our first meeting, which was held at Denny's Restaurant in Auburn, Maine, on April 6, 1985. I recall clearly the large corner table we were seated at and, looking through a mist that blurred the events of the next century, I can vaguely see a parade of men and women in military uniforms of all nations marching from the Veterans Bridge that spans the Androscoggin River between Lewiston and Auburn to Denny's Restaurant at the top of the hill where they will fasten a bronze plaque on the wall above a corner table honoring that time and place."

Okay, maybe I didn't play for the Red Sox and didn't score 40 points with the Celtics but I was there at Denny's restaurant 40 years ago when we decided to organize Veterans For Peace (VFP). It

were Viet Nam combat vets. Gerry was a medic and I was artillery. Jerry was a Marine whose brother was killed in Viet Nam, Ken was a medic in the Korean War and Willard was a chaplain in WWII. Yeah, a lot of experience, and many stories that could be told. We went way back.

We realized at the time there wasn't much of an organized veterans' voice in the peace movement. So we used telephones (audio devices attached to kitchen walls) and newspapers to see if other veterans were interested in joining us. Whoa. Within a year, our organization was becoming a multi-chaptered federation of angry and empathetic U.S. citizens horrified by yet another brutal war being waged in their names. Our main focus was describing the real impacts of war and militarism on the innocent victims of this aggression while also capturing our fellow veterans' anguish. We offered veterans a means to use their military experiences for a positive aspiration—a world for their children



Photo: Ellen Davidson

Veterans For Peace is an international organization made up of military veterans, military family members, and allies. We are dedicated to building a culture of peace, exposing the true causes and costs of war, and healing the wounds of war.



For more information or to join or support our work, scan the QR at left or visit veteransforpeace.org.



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Musk Sinks Our Ships to Assure There Will Be No Going Back

By Donna Cameron

A conquistador from 500 years ago, hellbent on winning at any cost, has much to teach us about America today. If we have the stomach to see it.

Hernán Cortés led the expedition from Spain to the New World that resulted in the fall of the Aztec Empire and its leader, Montezuma II. Arriving on the shores of Veracruz, Mexico in 1519, Cortés saw that his men were exhausted and dispirited. There were calls to turn back, whispers of mutiny. Cortés, it is said, responded by burning and sinking his ships,



thus stranding his crew, and giving them little choice but to fight and vanquish the Aztecs.

As Elon Musk demolishes the systems, institutions, and infrastructure that support and sustain America, I am reminded of the rapid fall of the Aztec empire, and the deliberate ruination that precipitated it. Like Cortés, Musk's goals are destruction and assurance that there can be no going back.

And another once-great empire falls.

Each day, the nascent "Mump" Regime—allegedly helmed by U.S. President Donald Trump, but clearly commanded by Musk—razes more American foundations, moving us ever closer to the tipping point where far-right authoritarianism replaces an admittedly flawed, but principled, democracy.

If our president hasn't the historical awareness, focus, or intellectual capacity to formulate and execute a complex plan, his surrogates and henchman do, and they are reveling in the dual promises of destruction and personal gain.

As Elon Musk, the Project 2025 architects, their accomplices, and enforcers gleefully erase 250 years of accomplishment—by turns, glorious and imperfect—

they are creating a seemingly irreversible path to their own ends by reducing to rubble the institutions that might save us.

Department of Education? Burn it.

FEMA? Burn it.

USAID? Burn it.

NATO? Burn it.

Climate science? Burn it.

Medical research? Burn it.

Alliances, treaties, promises? Burn them.

The Republicans who control Congress daily demonstrate their own gullibility and culpability. And the Democratic minority wrings its hands, wavering among unorganized resistance, outrage, and a dawning awareness not only that it can happen here, but that it is happening here.

Musk's inauguration salute is not the only apparent fascist signal from Trump's administration

For the most part, the American people mirror Congress. Many outraged and resistant. Some condoning much of what they see, cherry-picking actions they consider laudable, while refusing to scrutinize the ones that cause their stomachs to clench. And others naively hoping thugs who have cheated their way through life will suddenly begin playing by the rules,

i.e., the Constitution, the courts, existing laws, and the checks and balances of a three-branch government. Rules, the thugs sneer, are for suckers and losers. Meanwhile, they set fire to and sink ship after ship. There will be no going back, they assure themselves with a smug grin and a not-so-clandestine Nazi salute.

They may be right.

I'd like to believe that the best and brightest minds among democracy's defenders and patriots are huddled together crafting solutions that will save America from the evil unleashed upon us by corrupt, would-be dictators, but with each day's atrocities, lies, deliberate distractions, and concealments, my hope for my country fades.

America is burning. People are overwhelmed and exhausted by the magnitude of consistent, determined, and effective resistance against the conquistadors who, having skuttled the ships, seek now to become overlords. Yet we have no choice but to act, to push back. As British statesman Edmund Burke famously said, "Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little."

This is what it looks like when a once-great country is dismantled.

Do not look away.

Donna Cameron is the author of *A Year of Living Kindly: Choices That Will Change Your Life and the World Around You*. She lives in Washington state.

Rule by Fiat a Bipartisan Legacy

By Vinnie Rotondaro

U.S. President Donald Trump's latest defiance of the courts—this time refusing to follow an appellate judge's order to halt migrant deportations—has triggered another round of liberal outrage. Critics are calling it an authoritarian move, a blatant assault on the rule of law, and a warning sign that American democracy is on its last legs.

But if this is the end of democracy, it's been ending for a long time. And not just at Trump's hands.

The central truth we keep missing—especially on the left—is that Trump is not an aberration. He's a grotesque continuation. The playbook he uses was written by both parties over decades of eroding democratic norms, consolidating executive power, and circumventing meaningful checks on authority. Trump didn't invent the impulse to rule by fiat; he just brings it out into the open.

If we want to stop the next Trump, or the next expansion of executive lawlessness, we can't keep pretending he came out of nowhere.

Consider the legal justification Trump has floated for ignoring the courts: The



United States is "at war." Therefore, he claims, wartime powers apply—even domestically, even over immigration courts. To many, this sounds like a dystopian twist. But it's eerily familiar. Because the same logic has been used, repeatedly, by both Republican and Democratic administrations since 9/11.

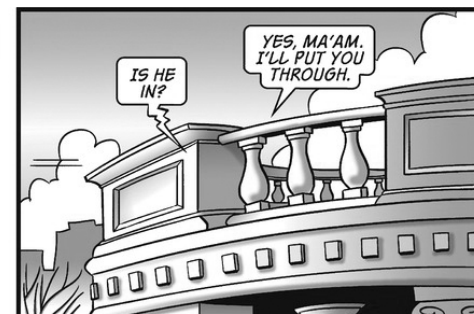
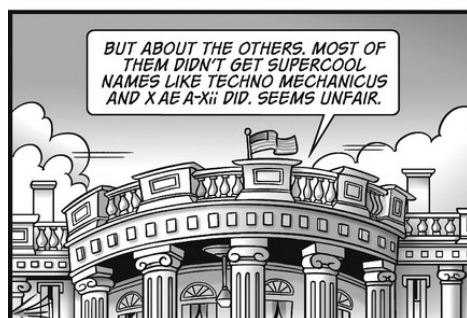
Congress Granted War Powers

After the attacks on the Twin Towers, Congress passed the Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF), which gave the executive branch sweeping powers to pursue terrorism around the world. That one document has served as the legal scaffolding for 20-plus years of undeclared wars and covert operations in Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, and elsewhere.

No further congressional approval was needed. The public never had a say. The war powers clause of the Constitution became symbolic—if not obsolete.

Former President Barack Obama inherited that framework and expanded it. His

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***‘We will not
take lectures on
antisemitism from
segregationists
and neo-nazis.’***



Columbia Professor Speaks Out Against the Kidnapping of Mahmoud Khalil

On March 12, at a rally in front of the New York City courthouse where Mahmoud Khalil's hearing took place, classicist and Columbia University Associate Professor Joseph Howley made the following speech. It has been lightly edited for publication.

By Joseph Howley

My name is Joseph Howley and I am an associate professor of Classics at Columbia University. The last time I spoke at a press conference was April 18, 2024. That day, NYPD officers in crowd control gear entered our campus for the first time in decades and carried off dozens of students who were peacefully and quietly encamped on one of the enclosed lawns in front of our library, where they threatened no one. As I watched the police action unfold in horror, I received a request to speak at an emergency press conference alongside Mahmoud, who had just been asked to negotiate on behalf of the encampment.

It is always dangerous to speak in public for Palestinian rights, safety, and freedom with your face uncovered and your name declared. You can be sure you will be harassed, doxed, terrorized. People will try to get you fired from your job. For speaking here, I will receive a new round of death threats, slander, complaints to my employer. When I step down from this podium, I will publish these remarks, in order to protect myself from inevitable attempts to misrepresent them.

Mahmoud, as the student negotiator, took these same risks and more. Mahmoud is a man of decency, honor, and kindness. He has distinguished himself, in his work as an advocate and a negotiator, as someone committed to the peaceful resolution of difficult situations and conflicts. He is a consummate diplomat in his disposition and character.

What the Trump government is doing to Mahmoud is obscene. It is unreasonable, intolerable, unconstitutional. So why do they think they can get away with it?

The Trump administration is betting that Americans will happily look the other way as one more Palestinian is victimized here on American soil. They are betting that when you hear Mahmoud's name, or the word "Palestinian," the parts of you that make you a thinking and rational and caring person will switch off, and you will believe the worst about him, and you will turn a blind eye to these grave violations of his rights.

After what I've seen over the last year and a half, I'm not sure they're wrong. Anti-Palestinian groups have

spent all year casually leveling the most dangerous accusations on the flimsiest of grounds and members of our own community have repeated them. Don't like seeing a keffiyeh? Call them a terrorist and call the cops. Don't like their views? Call them antisemitic and get them expelled. Don't like that your Jewish colleague has the chutzpah to say "Free Palestine?" Report him for Jew hatred to the university task force. Don't like seeing a broad and diverse movement of courageous young people standing together against the ethnic cleansing of Gaza, funded by American tax dollars? Call your friends in the government and send the feds to their door.

As an educator, it disgusts me that anyone who wants to be taken seriously in association with a university would deal so ignorantly with language and truth. But more than that, I am ashamed, as a Jewish person, that this kind of slander has found such currency in some parts of the Jewish community, in service of the deeply racist and antisemitic Trump agenda.

Trump's claim that this atrocity "combats antisemitism" is insulting. We will not take lectures on antisemitism from segregationists and neo-nazis. We will not allow a white supremacist president and his party to claim

the mantle of Jewish safety as they shred the Constitution and spin outlandish legal theories to justify the suppression of dissent and the brutalization of those who oppose war and apartheid.

One of the most insidious forms of prejudice toward Jews is the trope of Dual Allegiance, which suggests that we Jews, because of our ethnicity or religion, have secret political commitments that are at odds with or hos-

***We will not allow a white
supremacist president and his
party to claim the mantle of
Jewish safety as they shred the
Constitution.***

tile to the communities we live in—that we are not to be trusted, but you should always believe the worst about us and our commitments. When Donald Trump sneers at "globalists," this is what he means.

When I see people unquestioningly trafficking in the wildest assertions about Mahmoud because he is Palestinian, I hear the exact same species of prejudice that drove generations of my own family from their homes in Europe.

Anyone who circulated the lies about Mahmoud that resulted in his detention should be ashamed. And if you find yourself believing whatever someone tells you about Mahmoud because he is Palestinian or because he spoke up against a murderous war, I can only implore you to scrutinize your own soul.

Why are we here? Because we want our friend back. But we are also here because what happens to Mahmoud could happen to any of us. If they can strip the green card from a lawful permanent resident, they can do whatever they want to a citizen. If you are waiting for permission to think of this as a real and actual crisis, this is it. What has been done to Mahmoud goes far beyond whether or not you agree with the cause of Palestinian liberation. Where exactly are we in the poem that begins, "When they came for the Communists, I did not speak out."?

Well, they've already come for the asylum seekers, they've come for the migrant families, and now they've come for Mahmoud Khalil. It's not a very long poem. How far down that list do you think you are?

I have been proud to stand as a Jew beside Mahmoud Khalil and call for a free and just and peaceful Israel-Palestine. It is my honor now to stand before you and call on what remains of the United States government to do the right thing and free Mahmoud Khalil.

40 Years Ago

... continued from page 2

Charlie Liteky, a former high school quarterback, was a chaplain during the Viet Nam War and had received the Medal of Honor for braving intense fire to rescue 20 wounded soldiers. He would turn in that Medal of Honor at the Viet Nam Memorial Wall prior to the Fast for Life in 1986 in protest against the wars in Central America.

Brian Willson was a Viet Nam vet who turned against that war when his eyes opened to the horror U.S. bombs and napalm were inflicting on Vietnamese peasants. He later lost both his legs as he was blocking a munitions train headed for Central America. The last surviving member of that group, he is currently living and writing in Nicaragua. His autobiography, *Blood on the Tracks, the Life and Times of S. Brian Willson*, is exceptional.

These were wonderful, courageous, and empathetic veterans who were again putting their lives on the line and inspiring many with their sacrifice for life and peace.

At my age I realize that there is (probably) so much more in the past for me to reflect on than there will be

in the future. That said, I don't hesitate to use the past to shed light on the present moment to engage those younger than I in dialogue. We all have something to learn from each other. My lessons came from a life of teaching after having lived 13 months in a war zone. Coupled with that is a life as a Veteran For Peace. Now, on VFP's 40th anniversary I have to say that my modest contribution to this amazing group rises high in my mind as a milestone that made my life one worth living. Instead of giving in to despair over my time in the Viet Nam War, I joined others in using my experience to benefit the world. People today who are the age I was in 1969 and 1970, when I was in Viet Nam, should know that the older vets will stand with them as they, too, put their shoulders to the grindstone of nonviolent action and maybe even their lives on the line in the pursuit of peace and equality. We are in this together and are needed now, in what my friend Tarak Kauff says may be the early stages of a "technologically advanced surveillance/totalitarian police state" more than ever. Join us as we bring VFP's mission for peace and justice—Peace at Home, Peace Abroad—forward into the next 40 years.

—Doug Rawlings

The Perfidy of the Merchants of Death

By Jack Gilroy

The Merchants of Death (the military-industrial complex corporations), together with the American Israel Political Affairs Committee (AIPAC), control the U.S. Congress, showering them with money to get reelected.

Thirty-four years ago, following the fall of the Iron Curtain and the end of the Soviet Warsaw Pact that opposed NATO, Russia's prime peacemaker, Mikhail Gorbachev, offered to do what JFK proposed in his June 10, 1963, speech at American University—begin disarmament.

In that speech, which is well worth reading, he said, “What kind of peace do I mean? What kind of peace do we seek? Not a Pax Americana enforced on the world by American weapons of war. Not the peace of the grave or the security of the slave. I am talking about genuine peace, the kind of peace that makes life on earth worth living, the kind that enables men and nations to grow and to hope and to build a better life for their children—not merely peace for Americans but peace for all men and women—not merely peace in our time but peace for all time.”

The forces that killed JFK were the same forces that destroyed the possibility of peace with Russia—the Merchants of Death. There is no money in peace if you design and make systems that focus on blowing things up and killing people. The neo-cons Cheney, Wolfowitz, Pearle, and a hateful anti-Russian Secretary of State Zbigniew Brzezinski, whose influence survived his title, followed the powerful lobby of the Merchants of Death to make Russia our enemy as Russia was reaching out for friendship.

In 1991, I taught Participation in Government, a mandated New York State subject for seniors. My Maine-Endwell High School seniors, many of whom had parents working in one of the local Defense (sic) industries in the Southern Tier of New York, knew the time was ripe for change. They contacted Congressman Matt McHugh, who had previously spoken to them about economic conversion—ending weapons making and focusing on designing and making useful systems and products for people and our earth. McHugh gave them encouraging wishes to get to work on the project. Students contacted Martin Marietta (now Lockheed Martin), General Electric, and Link Aviation.

They invited each company to an evening town meeting in the high school auditorium to speak with the students and engage in a Q&A about alternatives to designing and making systems and products of war.

Only Link Aviation executive Robert Gallagher came to the Town Meeting. His daughter, Tricia, was one of my students.

Even with just one Defense company represented, the Town Meeting was stimulating, leaving us all hopeful. Gallagher had good input, and the demand from students and community members to break our national war addiction filled the auditorium.

*There is no money in peace if you
design and make systems that focus on blowing
things up and killing people.*

It's time in 2025 to try again—this time with university students.

University students and community activists for justice need to have workshops and town hall meetings everywhere. The merchants of death are (not coincidentally) in every U.S. congressional district. Town meetings on economic conversion will destroy the outstanding lie that American “security” depends on weapons-making and militarism.

Our Department of War (cleverly renamed Defense in 1947) has made us aggressive with attacks on people and lands around the world. The U.S. military and Mer-

chants of Death have killed millions, destroyed houses, apartment buildings, hospitals, schools, and, according to the Watson Institute, have left more than 40 million displaced people just in the Middle East alone.

The false narrative of the military keeping Americans safe can be crushed with education. It's a huge task since Hollywood glorification of war stories and heroes, Super Bowl military gratification with flyovers, huge flags, and smartly uniformed Army, Navy, Marine, Air Force, and Space Force mixed with patriotic music leaves many Americans proud to teary-eyed. The military is our sacred cow, and the Pentagon and Merchants of Death have successfully implanted this narrative in the American psyche.

Generation Z may not be buying the false narrative. Universities have become America's conscience, and young people, even those who do not pursue higher education are not flocking to enlist in the military.

The Stu Naismith Veterans For Peace chapter in Bing-

hamton, and local TV companies will likely cover our actions. The Six Broken Laws Letter developed by Attorney Terry Lodge of Ohio for Veterans For Peace (see page 13) will be delivered to each warmaker, charging them with aiding and abetting war crimes in Gaza and many other targets of the U.S. and its NATO subordinate mobsters (e.g., UK, France, and other near-dead colonial parasites).

Students at Binghamton University have googled Broome County NY Defense Contractors and were shocked to find more than 90 war contractors near the university and many right in town near student residences. It's a short drive to nearby Owego where Lockheed Martin has taken in \$16,277,084,810 over the years. Lockheed Martin is the monster of all war-making plants. It has 197 other factories in the U.S. and another 150 abroad.

Since they have a special relationship with Binghamton University, Lockheed Martin and BAE Systems do not have to send recruiters since they are embedded at BU.



Binghamton University students.

hamton, NY, team has been working with Binghamton University and Cornell University students this past year of campus uprisings. Binghamton University students have attempted to block Merchants of Death Job Fairs with signs, street theater, and flyers advising students not to interview with the war contractors. At Cornell, students went a step further and filled a Boeing pre-job fair session with students asking questions such as: “You seem proud of your accomplishments at Boeing. Do you find great joy in producing weapons that tear apart children and their mothers, destroy homes, schools, and hospitals?” After several similar questions, Boeing decided not to have its job fair at Cornell on September 18.

Both companies are thought well of by the community, not just for good-paying jobs but also for philanthropic acts, like providing service dogs to military veterans or scholarships for students from diverse backgrounds.

At nearby Cornell, located in Tompkins County, NY, students need not travel off campus on Tax Day to follow the money of war planning. The number of research contracts from the Department of Defense (DOD) at Cornell is vast.

On Tax Day 2025, some of these Cornell DOD research centers will have student visitors to expose how Cornell profits from war planning. With 54% of U.S. taxes going to U.S. past, present, and future wars, Cornell students will question why.

Imagine if those funds now directed to the mad scientists and Merchants of Death were redirected to sustainability.

Gen Z has a significant mission, and older generations must assist them.

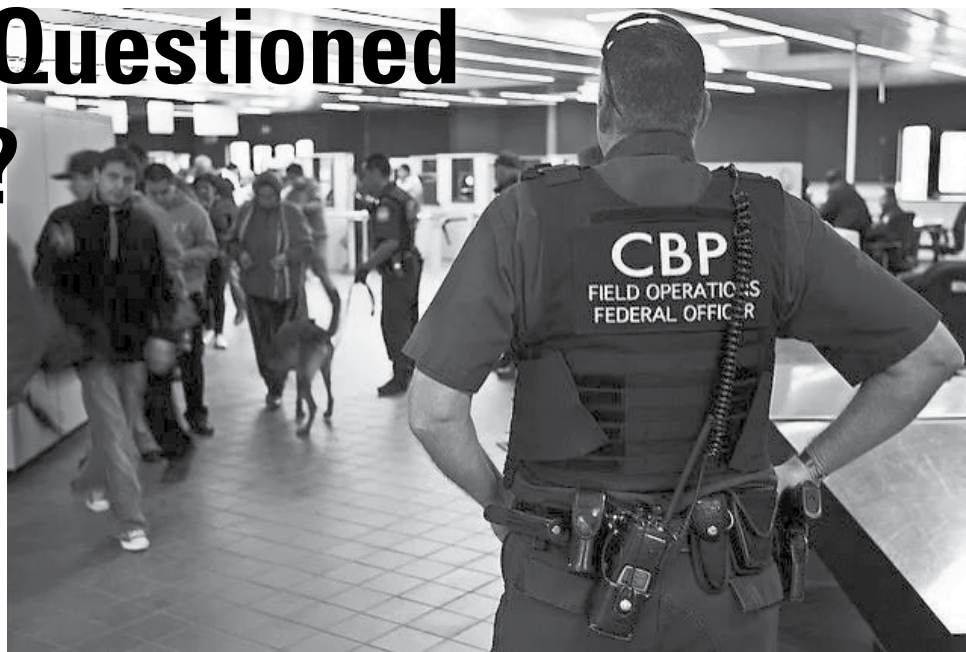
“Freedom is not a state; it is an act. It is not some enchanted garden perched high on a distant plateau where we can finally sit down and rest. Freedom is the continuous action we all must take, and each generation must do its part to create an even more fair, more just society. The work of love, peace, and justice will always be necessary, until their realism and their imperative takes hold of our imagination, crowds out any dream of hatred or revenge, and fills up our existence with their power.”—John Lewis, *Across That Bridge: Life Lessons and a Vision for Change*

Jack Gilroy has been organizing justice actions since the 1960s. He was honorably discharged from the U.S. Navy and U.S. Army Infantry, and converted to nonviolence during the Viet Nam War. Nonviolently standing for justice has led to him spending time in Southern jails, federal prisons, and more recently Jamesville Penitentiary.

Why Was I Questioned by the Feds?

An agent was waiting for me after I got off an international flight. I was treated to a brief but disturbing question-and-answer session.

By Max Blumenthal



As I approached the Customs line at Dulles International Airport early on the morning of February 24, a man called out to me, “Mr. Blumenthal?” He identified himself as an officer with Customs and Border Protection, and led me into a cavernous secondary screening room, where he treated me to a strange and disconcerting questioning session. I had just returned from a leisurely trip to Nicaragua with my family during which I participated in no political activities. But the agent’s line of questioning suggested federal authorities had little interest in my visit to Nicaragua, a country that happens to be controlled by a socialist-oriented government on Washington’s hit list.

As my family and I followed the agent down a long hallway, he turned to me and said, “I caught your latest appearance on

Judge Napolitano [sic].” He was referring to Andrew Napolitano, a former Fox News host and federal judge who hosts a daily livestream featuring former military and intelligence officials as well as journalists like me who dissent from official national security narratives. Nearly all of my appearances on Napolitano’s program, *Judging Freedom*, have focused on Israel’s blood-soaked wars in Gaza, Lebanon and beyond throughout the past 16 months. When I asked the agent how he liked my interview with the Judge, he shrugged and declined to volunteer an opinion. Was he simply trying to warm me up for our own question-and-answer session, or darkly signaling to me that Big Brother was watching? “This is just a friendly exchange,” he insisted as we entered the secondary screening room.

“You’re not a target or anything.”

Standing across from me at a metal desk, the agent asked me to fill out a questionnaire with my personal info and details of my trip. As soon as I completed the form, he flipped it over and displayed a handwritten list of a handful of names. “Do you know any of these people?” he asked.

Two of those listed were Anglo names: Nicole Smith and Susan Benjamin. The other three were extremely common Muslim names. Because the agent would not allow me to photograph the list, I was only able to commit one to memory: Muhammad Khan. I could not recall any people I knew with those names. And the only Nicole Smith I could think of was the late model who died under strange circumstances at age 39. I therefore told the agent

the names were unfamiliar to me.

To be sure, I would not have assisted the officer even if I had a personal connection with one of the names on the list. I’ve learned from activists and journalists who’ve experienced similar probing that federal agents often deploy inane or disingenuous questions to get their subject talking, then attempt to manipulate or entrap them so they can implicate them in a crime. In fact, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that police are allowed to lie to elicit confessions from suspects. If government agents want to subject American citizens like me to extended questioning, they must follow constitutional procedures and allow us to have a lawyer present.

After spending several minutes inside a small office, the agent returned to inform us we were free to go. As we exited the screening room and headed toward the baggage claim area, an airport worker from West Africa pulled up to me on a ride-on floor scrubber, shook my hand and asked for a selfie. Like the federal agent, he was apparently aware of my journalistic output, but viewed it in a much more favorable light.

While waiting for our luggage, my wife, Anya Parampil, had a disturbing realization. She had been googling the names on the list the officer presented to me and discovered that Susan Benjamin was the birth name of our friend, Medea Benjamin, cofounder of CODEPINK and one of the most widely recognized antiwar activists on the planet.

The following day, I informed Medea about my encounter at Dulles and asked if

continued on next page ...

Rule by Fiat

... continued from page 3

administration developed the now infamous drone kill list, justified targeted assassinations (including of U.S. citizens) and defended the government’s right to indefinitely detain terrorism suspects without trial.

Obama didn’t officially suspend *habeas corpus*, but in practice, he upheld a system that made the writ meaningless for hundreds of detainees held at Bagram and Guantánamo. The position of his Department of Justice was clear: The executive has the authority to detain and kill, beyond judicial oversight, because we are at war.

This is the true bipartisan legacy that paved the way for Trump. The removal of checks and balances didn’t happen overnight. It was built incrementally, piece by piece, under the banner of national security—with the cooperation and silence of the same liberal establishment that now acts scandalized by Trump’s every defiance.

In Yemen, Trump Resumes Forever-War Posture

It’s worth asking: Why wasn’t there more pearl clutching when the executive branch was unilaterally deciding who lived or died abroad, without congressional debate or judicial process? Why didn’t more alarm bells ring when Democrats joined Republicans in handing over war-

making powers and then refused to take them back? Why was it acceptable to rule by emergency decree when the emergency was foreign—but suddenly unacceptable when the same logic is turned inward?

Trump is now openly talking about “eradicating” the Houthis in Yemen—an aggressive military escalation that directly contradicts the MAGA-era promise of no new foreign wars. So much for populist anti-interventionism. In lockstep with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Israel, Trump appears eager to resume the forever war posture. And once again, no one’s talking about congressional approval.

This is the cycle we’re caught in. Trump exposes the tools others helped create. He strips them of their moral veneer, revealing the ugly core. And rather than confront the system itself, liberals point at Trump as a singular villain—as if everything was working just fine before he came along.

The truth is harder to face: If we want to stop the next Trump, or the next expansion of executive lawlessness, we can’t keep pretending he came out of nowhere. We need to reckon with the fact that our democracy has been undermined from within—by both parties, for years. We need to challenge not just the man, but the machine.

And that’s something the Democratic Party, in its current corporate and security-state-aligned form, seems unwilling—or unable—to do. It would require renouncing its own legacy, from the Clinton-era crime bill to Obama-era surveillance and drone wars. It would require

fundamentally rethinking how power is distributed in this country, and how easily it can be abused.

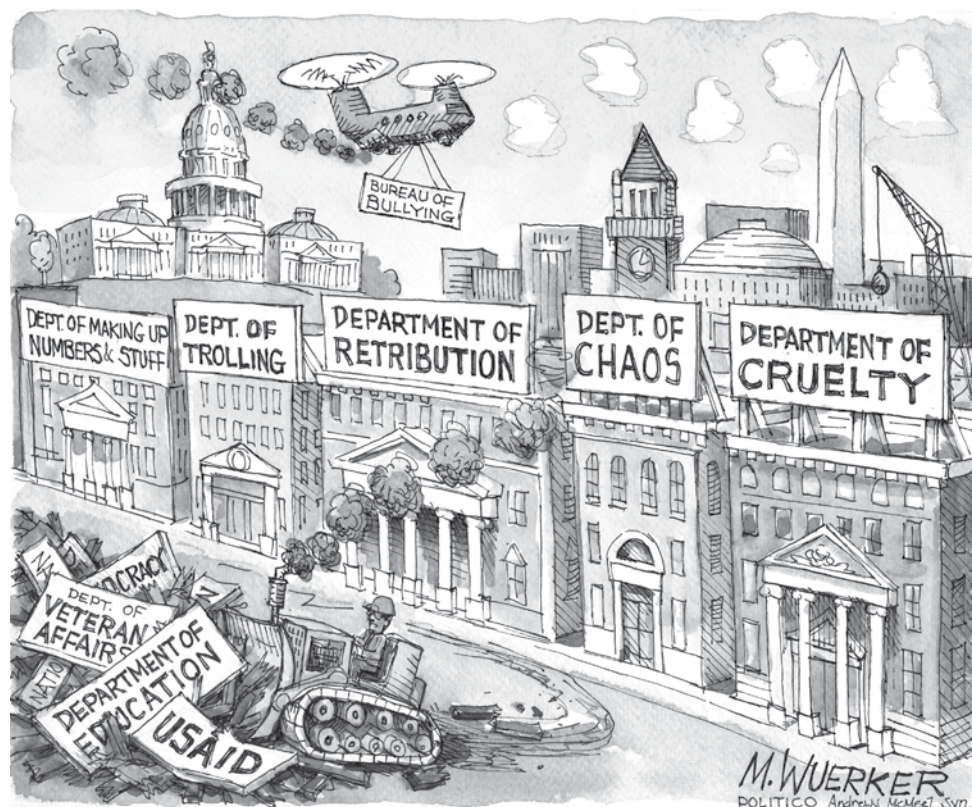
Until that happens, we shouldn’t be surprised when Trump defies the next court order. We shouldn’t act shocked when the language of war is used to suspend due process. We shouldn’t cling to the fantasy that our institutions will save us, when those institutions have been hollowed out by decades of bipartisan compromise.

Trump didn’t break democracy. He just

took the mask off.

Originally published by Common Dreams.

Vinnie Rotondaro’s work has appeared in *Vox*, *Vice* and *Narratively*, where he won the 2014 New York Press Club award for “best internet feature.” Currently, he is a doctoral student at the California Institute of Integral Studies where he is studying the intersections of identity, power structures, and historical consciousness, with a focus on the Italian American experience.



Questioned

... continued from previous page

she had experienced anything similar. She told me there was a period when she was harassed by federal authorities each time she traveled out of the country. The FBI once dispatched an officer to meet her at an airport upon her return from a foreign trip, and called her on several occasions in an unsuccessful attempt to solicit a “meeting.” She said the harassment stopped after she filed a series of complaints, but my experience has led her to believe it will begin again.

While I was allowed to return to my country after a fairly brief question-and-answer session with a polite federal officer, the interaction felt like an act of political harassment, and seemed to signal an escalation against journalists and activists who’ve expressed antiwar, anti-Zionist views. I can only speculate on what the Feds’ ultimate objective was, however, I know of several antiwar activists who have had FBI agents appear at their doors over the past several months asking questions about Iran and individuals with Muslim or Arab names. Just down the road from Dulles, the FBI raided the home of a Palestinian American family whose daughter is a Palestine solidarity activist at George Mason University.

Within the broader realm of Five Eyes, in European vassal states without the same free speech protections Americans enjoy, journalists like Ali Abunimah, Asa Winstanley, and Richard Medhurst have been subjected to police raids, imprisonment, and even criminal prosecution for the opinions they’ve expressed on Israel-Palestine. My colleague at The Grayzone, Kit Klarenberg, was detained by British counter-terror cops and grilled for hours about his journalism on London’s machinations in Ukraine and beyond. Another one of our contributors, Jeremy Loffredo, spent several days in an Israeli prison and was ordered to self-deport after authorities falsely accused him of “assisting an enemy during wartime” for his journalism inside the country’s occupied frontiers. In Canada, activist Yves Engler was just released from five days in jail after a fanatical Zionist activist, Dahlia Kurtz, accused him of “hate speech” for branding her a “fascist.” Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu travels freely from Berlin to Washington, DC, despite an ICC warrant for his arrest for authorizing ghastly war crimes in the besieged Gaza Strip.

My experience at Dulles International Airport paled in comparison to what a growing number of journalists and activists have endured in NATO states under Zionist management. Nonetheless, it is important to document encounters like these, and to prepare for future interactions that might not be as “friendly.”

Originally published by the Gray Zone.

Max Blumenthal is a journalist, author, blogger, and filmmaker. He has written for The Nation, AlterNet, The Daily Beast, Al Akhbar, Mondoweiss, and Media Matters for America, and contributed to Al Jazeera English, The New York Times and The Los Angeles Times. Blumenthal is the editor of The Grayzone website.

For the genocide of Gaza and ethnic cleansing of the West Bank

They’re All Going to Hell

By Col. (Ret) Ann Wright

Every single one of them, who participated in the U.S. and Israeli genocide of Gaza ... are going to hell!

I’m not much of a believer in hell but I hope there is one now, because a lot of people need to go there.

What the Israeli politicians and military have done to Gaza with the complicity of U.S. presidents, the U.S. Congress and US military is deserving of going to hell!!

May every one of the souls of each of the children, mothers, fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, cousins, entire families that were murdered by U.S. bombs dropped on them visit each night the U.S enablers of the genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza.



Bodies are lined up for identification after being unearthed from a mass grave found in the Nasser Medical Complex in the southern Gaza Strip on April 25, 2024 [AFP]

The Catholic U.S. Presidency Complicit in Genocide

Let’s name those in the Biden Administration who for 17 months were directly responsible for the Israeli genocide in Gaza. Let’s remember all the “good” Catholics in the Biden administration who went to Mass each week yet piously assisted the genocide by sending weapons that killed now over 60,000 Palestinians and tens of thousands still buried under the rubble!

Pope Francis condemned Israel’s military campaign in Gaza, calling the humanitarian crisis “very serious and shameful. We cannot in any way accept the bombing of civilians. We cannot accept that children are freezing to death because hospitals have been destroyed or a country’s energy network has been hit.”

It would not be the first time the Pope has identified and condemned the role of individual Catholics in genocide. In 2017, Pope Francis asked for forgiveness for Catholic Church’s role in Rwanda genocide acknowledging that some Catholic priests and nuns “succumbed to hatred and violence” by taking part in 1994 killings.

First, let’s remember pious Catholic President Joe Biden, his wife Jill, and one-third of Biden’s Cabinet members and special advisors were Catholic. They are:

Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin; Administrator of USAID Samantha Power; Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis Mc-

Donough; Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra; Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack; Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo; Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm; Climate Envoy John Kerry

Women in the Biden Administration Complicit in the Genocide of Gaza

Let’s not forget the 36 senior women, mothers and grandmothers, in the Biden administration, many of whom were lawyers, human rights lawyers at that, who were actively helping provide weapons to Israel to kill as many Palestinians as possible.

U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris; Jill Biden; Linda Thomas-Greenfield, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations; Samantha Power, administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development and former U.S.

ambassador-at-large for Global Women’s Issues; Michele Sumilas, acting deputy administrator of USAID; Isobel Coleman, deputy administrator of USAID for Policy and Programming; Stephanie L. Hallett, chargé d’affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem; Ambassador Yael Lempert, U.S. Embassy in Jordan; Evyenia Sidereas, deputy chief of mission, U.S. Embassy, Cairo; Maggie Goodlander, U.S. congresswoman elected in November 2024; Lisa A. Carty, U.S. ambassador to the U.N. Economic and Social Council; Dr. Dafna H. Rand, assistant secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL).

Trump Administration Complicit in the Israeli Genocide of Gaza.

And now President Donald Trump, only two months into his “Peace administration,” has taken over U.S. complicity in the Israeli genocide of Gaza and the ever-increasing displacement, ethnic cleansing by violence of Palestinians in the West Bank.

Trump polluted the political waters early in his administration by describing building a Trump “Riviera” on the Gaza Coast, saying that Palestinians would need to go elsewhere during reconstruction and perhaps forever.

Tragically but predictably, as Phase Two of the Ceasefire was to come into effect requiring Israel to remove all of its military from Gaza, the U.S gave a green light to the Israeli government to continue bombing Gaza, continuing the genocide of Gaza. The Trump administration intends to send 35,000 two thousand pound bombs to Israel. Each of those 2,000-pound bombs has a devastating blast radius of a quarter of a mile.

Short List of Trump Officials Who Should Go to Hell

President Donald Trump; Vice President JD Vance; Secretary of State Marco Rubio; Secretary of the Treasury Scott Bessent; Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth; Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard; Director of the Central Intelligence Agency John Ratcliffe; White House Chief of Staff Susie Wiles; Special Advisor Elon Musk; Nominee as U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee.

Everyone in the Israeli Government Should Go to Hell

The names of those in the Israeli government and Israeli military who planned and implemented the genocide of Gaza and the ethnic cleansing of the West Bank are in the thousands, too numerous to name individually.

No doubt, the souls of those murdered by the Israeli government will visit each one of them to remind them of the horrors they have created and haunt them for the rest of their lives.

Ann Wright served 29 years in the U.S. Army/Army Reserves and retired as a colonel. She served 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 U.S. war on Iraq. She is a member of CODEPINK, Veterans For Peace, Women Cross DMZ, and many other peace groups. She is the co-author of Dissent: Voices of Conscience.

Rally at the Courthouse

By Denny Riley

On Saturday afternoon, February 23, 2025, a rally was held on the lawn and front steps of the Ontario County courthouse. Sam Nordquist, a young trans-vestite had been tortured and murdered. The rally was a memorial service, and a reminder of the oppression of normal life for the LBGTQA+ population, of the backsliding of what had appeared to be progress, and of the lack of equal protection under the law. Two hundred and ten people showed up. The snow was six inches deep.

Ten people spoke. Every one of them was worth listening to. I've never had that experience at any kind of rally. That stayed on my mind as much as anything I saw or heard. Finally, I think I understood why. If I go to an antinuclear weapons rally, the speakers explain the mechanisms of the bombs, how much they cost, how close we are to blowing

about. They've been bullied and jeered and beaten up. They've been banished from jobs and apartments and families. They've been kicked out of the army and out of diners. They've been stared at and ostracized at the same time.

One time a man told me genetic research had been done and no proof was found that homosexuality has an organic basis. "Which means it's a choice!" The man cheered when he delivered the conclusion. He now had proof homosexuality is a demonic intrusion.

To come to that conclusion seems to me an indication of a vicious debate within the man. He told me once that he never looked at another boy's genitals in his high school shower room. Other than the Marine Corps or the Navy Seals, it's rare to get a medal for getting the shit kicked out of you. To be gay in our culture has always had a downside.

Half my four years in the Air Force I resided in barracks built during WWII. They'd



At an airbase on the flat and barren Great Plains, a tech sergeant had a room. He was divorced. A nice man, powerfully built, with a thin moustache above his upper lip. Always friendly, always a smile, but he didn't mix with us. After a few months a young man began visiting him, a fair-haired airman second class. Who knows what went on in the kid's head, but he was engaged to a girl back home and one day went to the chaplain for guidance. The chaplain, however, was foremost a major in the U.S. Air Force. He turned in the sergeant and the airman, and they were kicked out. The sergeant had been in the Air Force for eighteen and a half years and had a son in his third year at VMI.

Until a few weeks ago it seemed our military and homosexuality had learned to co-habitate. You just never know. In those few weeks any reference to humans as other than male or female have been erased from federal forms and regulations. To tell everyone in a room they are equal and to have everyone in the room believe it are very different things. So it is with bigotry. There are straight white guys and there is everyone else. Sure, many, many people

don't like white guys but where does that get them? Kept out of owning a house in the better neighborhoods unless you're a dentist? Given a table near the kitchen door in a restaurant unless you have celebrity recognition? A few months ago my friend and her movie star boyfriend walked into a nice restaurant in a good neighborhood late one evening. They both were dressed well, came in to spend money, but they are Black. The manager looked at them and asked coldly, "What do you want?"

At the rally by the courthouse, I heard the LBGTQA+ community refer to each other as siblings. A dignified word that has always been a descriptor for sisters and brothers in one family.

I also heard these powerful chants: We're here! We're queer! We will not disappear! We're here! We're queer! We will not disappear!

I left the rally smiling.

Denny Riley is an Air Force veteran of the U.S. war in Viet Nam, a writer, and a member of San Francisco Veterans For Peace and the VFP Hoa Bien Chapter.

A few months ago my friend and her movie star boyfriend walked into a nice restaurant in a good neighborhood late one evening. They both were dressed well, came in to spend money, but they are Black. The manager looked at them and asked coldly, 'What do you want?'

ourselves to smithereens. But no one at the rally knows what it's like to be nuked.

The speakers standing in snow by the courthouse knew what they were talking

originally been open-bay but in the 1950s were rebuilt to have rooms for two or three airmen. An NCO could live in the barracks also and if one did, he rated a room alone.

Betrayal

... continued from page 1

claims processing, and education benefits they've earned."

Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Ranking Member Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) similarly said that "Congress worked in a bipartisan manner to pass the PACT Act and equip VA with the tools and resources needed to serve more veterans than ever. Since January 20, this administration has launched an all-out assault undermining that progress and attacking the VA workforce and the veterans it serves."

"This memo makes their goal crystal clear: They want to roll back the PACT Act by cutting 80,000 jobs—including 20,000 veterans—while starving VA's ability to meet increased demand in order to justify privatizing VA," Blumenthal continued. "Their plan prioritizes private-sector profits over veterans' care, balancing the budget on the backs of those who served. It's a shameful betrayal, and veterans will pay the price for their unforgivable corruption, incompetence, and immorality."

Congressman Chris Deluzio (D-Pa.), an Iraq War veteran, declared on the Musk-owned platform X that "they are trying to

destroy the VA. Miss me with your flag waving GOP ads wrapping yourself in my fellow veterans. We're up for this fight."

House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-N.Y.) hosted a Wednesday press conference about GOP attacks on veterans. He said that "thousands of veterans across the country have been hurt by the extreme reactions of Donald Trump, the

ing to perform as well for veterans, and veterans are going to get harmed," warned Missal, who was Blumenthal's guest for Trump's March 4 address to Congress. The ousted inspector general described the VA as "a really complicated, hard to manage organization," like a big corporation, and defended his work there.

Outrage over the VA's plan to work with

director of the Working Families Party.

The watchdog Accountable.US called the reporting on the memo "damning," while American Federation of Government Employees national President Everett Kelley stressed that the layoffs "will destroy the VA's ability fulfill the PACT Act's promises to veterans who either died or became ill as a result of exposure to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances."

"The VA has been severely understaffed for many years, resulting in longer wait times for veterans in need," the union leader said. "The DOGE plunder of career VA employees, adding to the illegal mass firings of thousands of probationary employees, can only make matters worse. Veterans and their families will suffer unnecessarily, and the will of Congress will be ignored."

On behalf of the 311,000 VA employees his union represents, Kelley urged Congress "to intervene in these un-American tactics and put a stop to Elon Musk's DOGE rampage through America's most cherished agencies in a blatant attempt to justify privatizing government services."

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Jessica Corbett is a senior editor and staff writer for Common Dreams.

'Trump and Musk want to take away veterans' healthcare to pay for massive taxbreaks for billionaires. It's a morally bankrupt plan that will prevent those who served our country from getting the care they need.'

Trump administration, Elon Musk, and MAGA Republicans. It's unacceptable. It's unconscionable. It's un-American."

The Associated Press obtained the memo on March 5 and spoke with Michael Missal, one of several inspectors general suing over Trump's recent dismissal of the watchdogs. He told the AP that the VA is already suffering from a lack of "expertise" at the top of the agency.

"What's going to happen is VA's not go-

the Musk-led Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) to "resize and tailor the workforce to the mission and revised structure," as Syrek put it, reached far beyond members of government.

"Trump and Musk want to take away veterans' healthcare to pay for massive tax breaks for billionaires. It's a morally bankrupt plan that will prevent those who served our country from getting the care they need," said Maurice Mitchell, national

Fight the Rich

By Kshama Sawant

It's time to declare war on the rich. We need to build an organized, unified movement of working people to systematically take on the rich who run society and to undermine their ability to rule.

I served as the only socialist on the Seattle City Council for 10 years. In that decade, my council office led movements of working people to win historic victories, including the highest minimum wage in the country. I also saw firsthand how every part of the political establishment, led by big business and the Democratic Party, viciously opposed virtually every pro-worker piece of legislation we fought for. I saw how all the cogs of the capitalist machine—the establishment politicians, the courts, the police, the NGO leaders, and sadly many labor leaders—all work in concert together against the interests of workers.

We have no choice but to fight for radical change and for an end to the billionaire class. The alternative is a hellscape on earth.

Working people need to be clear about who our enemies are. They are the billionaires and the bosses, the capitalist class, their institutions, their political parties, and their more deceptive spokespeople, who sometimes sound like they support workers, but really act as pressure release valves and gatekeepers.

Our enemies are not other working-class or middle-class or poor people. They are not immigrants, trans people, ordinary Republican or Democratic voters, nor independent voters or nonvoters. Our enemies are those who make millions (or billions) of dollars a year, own multiple homes, own the politicians, own the land and resources, and who call the shots in this system. Our enemies are also all those who justify and protect the interests of the rich.

The billionaires themselves are responsible for the disasters engulfing us—Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, the healthcare CEOs, the major shareholders on Wall Street. We reject the bullshit liberal narrative that some collective “we” or “human nature” is responsible. It's not, it's the decision makers who own everything and who put their profits ahead of everything and everyone. These billionaires are driving us over the cliff of climate disaster, presiding over a dire cost-of-living crisis,



Photo by Nathaniel St. Clair

Globally, we are seeing the highest levels of inequality in human history.

The rulers and their political representatives are losing credibility. Kamala Harris' downfall was part of this—working people rejected the idea that they should swallow more of the status quo, which was all she offered us.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the Canadian Liberal Party are the latest in a series of global casualties of liberal bourgeois parties, following major ongoing political instability in Western Europe, including France and Germany. The incumbents in last year's elections in every single one of 10 countries were either booted out by voters or lost a significant share of the vote. Alongside the anger of millions in each of these nations, the most prominent feature is the absence of militant leadership on the Left and in the labor movement that is prepared to break with the political parties of the rich.

During the last election, Workers Strike Back joined Abandon Harris and millions of working people in making Harris and the Democrats pay a price for supporting the genocide in Gaza and for their systematic anti-worker agenda.

Workers Strike Back fought for every vote for Jill Stein as the strongest antiwar, pro-worker candidate, including in the crucial swing state of Michigan.

Workers Strike Back, Abandon Harris, and others were correct not to bend to the considerable “lesser evil” pressures and to instead take an independent working-class position, rejecting both capitalist parties.

The huge anger at the billionaires and

need it, with tens of thousands dying every year as a result. This fueled widespread public sympathy for the killing of the UnitedHealthcare CEO. The corporate media and politicians were stunned by the show of support on social media for the man accused of

his killing, Luigi Mangione. They were even more shocked when polling came out clarifying this was not some fringe phenomenon, but a strong majority sentiment.

In one poll, 69% of respondents placed a “great deal or moderate amount” of blame on healthcare coverage denials by insurance companies like UnitedHealthcare for Thompson's killing.

At the same time, recent polls showed working people want an alternative to this failed private insurance system. There's a resurgence of support for Medicare for All, which has long been wildly popular despite being completely abandoned by so-called “progressive” Democrats.

How Do Working People Fight Back?

The question that looms over everything is: how can we turn broad support for fundamental change into action? How do we raise the minimum wage nationwide to \$25/hour and tax Wall Street to fund housing and services? How do we win Medicare for All and eliminate for-profit insurance? How do we end the climate crisis? How do we end massive inequality and the billionaire class?

Killing individual CEOs is no solution. Thompson's place has already been filled by another blood-sucking corporate executive. In addition, if such killings were to continue, they would be used as pretext to attack mass movements and the Left.

In the late 19th century in Russia, there were similar kinds of attacks on individual members of the nobility, culminating in the killing of a czar, Alexander II. This led not to a surge in working people's movements, but to a brutal crackdown that undermined the workers' movement for decades. It was not the ideas of anarchism or methods of terrorism that led to the overthrow of capitalism for the first time in history, in Russia in 1917. It was genuine Marxism, which based itself on building the organized power of the working class to fight for revolutionary change.

What we need is to eliminate the for-profit system—capitalism—altogether.

Some on the Left think that all is lost because of Trump's election. We disagree with that. While Trump is absolutely no friend of working people, we need to recognize that a Harris presidency would also have been a disaster for us, and that we can win change and make our political mark as working people regardless of who is in office.

Some of the biggest progressive changes won by American working people came under the administration of Richard Nixon, who was a warmonger-

Workers Strike Back, Abandon Harris, and others were correct not to bend to the considerable ‘lesser evil’ pressures and to instead take an independent working-class position, rejecting both capitalist parties.

ing, anti-worker, racist, reactionary capitalist politician.

It was not because Nixon woke up one day with a conscience. It was the combined power of the social and workers' movements of that era that frightened the capitalist class and Nixon himself—fear that if they did not take action, there would be even greater upheaval and a threat to their very system.

The result was the end of the Vietnam War. For the first time, U.S. imperialism was forced by movements to end a war it was hellbent on prosecuting. Other historic victories were also won, such as the pro-abortion Roe v. Wade ruling by a court stacked with Nixon appointees, the creation of the pro-worker Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency.

We can force change under a Trump administration, but only if we don't lose sight of the fact that we don't just need reforms, we need a new system altogether, and the clock is ticking.

This article was abridged for space; you can find the complete article online at peaceandplanetnews.org/fight-the-rich/

Kshama Sawant is a revolutionary socialist, a founding member of Workers Strike Back, and a former Seattle City Councilmember who helped win the first \$15/hour minimum wage in a major city and the Amazon Tax on wealthy corporations to fund affordable housing.

We have no choice but to fight for radical change and for an end to the billionaire class. The alternative is a hellscape on earth.

and leading us toward World War III.

Last year saw the world's five richest billionaires increase their wealth by \$542 billion. Elon Musk's wealth alone is rapidly approaching half a trillion dollars.

warmongers will be expressed.

We saw this with the killing of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson.

Health insurance corporations systematically deny care to those who desperately

Remembering Ken Mayers

Article by Tarak Kauff
Photos by Ellen Davidson

On Jan. 27, Ken Mayers, who represented in many ways what a human being could and should be, left us for a more peaceful realm. Ken Mayers, USMC Major, Ret. died on that day of inoperable throat cancer. He was not world famous, but he was one of those kind, decent and compassionate people who dedicated his life to standing up for the downtrodden, especially those the U.S. exploited and oppressed through military force.

Ken's dad served in the Marines in WWII and in Korea so upon graduating Princeton where he had gone on an NROTC scholarship, he selected the Marine Corps option in 1958. As he often said, "I grew up drinking Marine Corps Kool-Aid." Somehow, although there was much he loved about the Marines, that didn't close his eyes to reality.

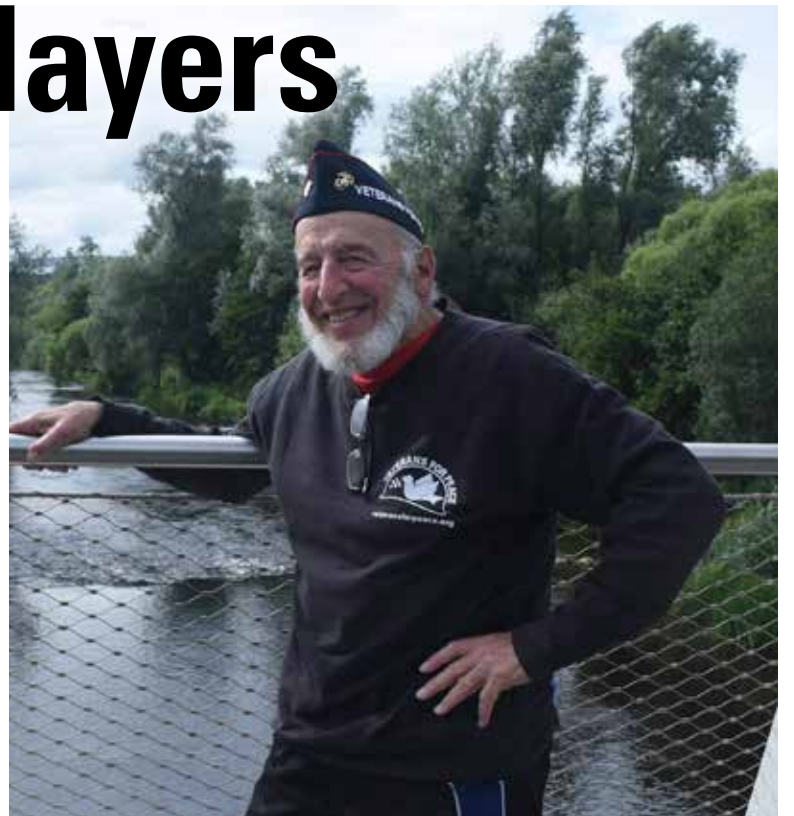
From March 1964 to November 1966, he was the commanding officer of a Communications Intelligence Marine outfit attached to an NSA unit based in Okinawa with detachments in Viet Nam. In 1966 Ken went to Viet Nam and visited the detachments in Chu Lai, Danang, and Phi Bai. He was never permanently assigned to Viet Nam but he saw enough to convince him to submit a letter of resignation that became effective in November 1966.

Explaining why he left a promising career as a Marine officer, he said, "Among other responsibilities, the field activity (in Viet Nam) was tasked with assigning missions to the so-called 'DeSoto Patrols' which routinely violated North Vietnam's territorial waters to cause them to activate their air defenses and communications systems so that we could intercept them and figure out their 'order of battle.' Since I was attached to the NSA field

activity on Okinawa, I habitually attended the daily intelligence briefings there. Two things quickly became obvious to me. 1) We were creating Viet Cong faster than we could kill them; and 2) we were deliberately provoking the North Vietnamese to attack our ships. When the so-called Tonkin Gulf incident took place and Lyndon Johnson used it to justify a war, this was the last straw in an eight-year accumulation of experiences that forced me to realize I could no longer serve as an instrument of U.S. policies."

In 1967, while pursuing graduate study in Political Science at UC-Berkeley, he became aware of a local organization called Veterans for Peace started by the great poet and WWII Navy combat veteran Lawrence Ferlinghetti. Ken joined the organization. Interestingly, another former VFP stalwart, WWII infantry veteran, Jay Wenk, was also a member. Ferlinghetti's VFP didn't last too long as it was more or less absorbed into Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW). At the time Ken had two children, both born in Okinawa when he was stationed there. Between family duties and being absorbed with his studies, Ken was not too active other than taking his family to protest marches. One such big antiwar

Clockwise from left: Getting arrested with Dan Ellsberg in March 2011; singing at anti-naval base protest on Jeju Island, South Korea, with Chuck Searcy, Tarak Kauff, and Ellen Davidson; with Jay Wenk at the 2015 Peoples' Climate March; Clare Daly's newspaper ad supporting Ken and Tarak in Ireland; with Ellen Barfield and Mike Hastie at a vigil against Israeli house demolitions in Al Araqueeb in the Negev, Israel; at Limerick University in Ireland in 2019.



march that Ken attended was led by then-Lt. (jg) Susan Schnall, the current Veterans For Peace President. On the day before the march Susan Schnall flew in a small plane piloted by a friend and dropped thousands of antiwar flyers promoting the march from the plane over five military bases and an aircraft carrier. Eventually Susan and Ken became close and lasting friends as they served in Veterans For Peace.

Ken retired from the USMC as a Major. He left active duty because of what he had seen the U.S. do in Viet Nam, but throughout his life, he embodied what it truly means to be "an officer and a gentleman." He was a rare and gentle person who loved people (and dogs) and was loved and respected by almost all who had the good fortune to know him. Even if you met him just briefly, you came away with that impression.

After leaving Berkeley to teach at Bennington College in Vermont, Ken became more active with local Quaker-led peace groups and in the early 1980s with the "Beyond War" movement. In 1986 Ken attended a Beyond War training in Rindge, New Hampshire. Retired Marine Corps Col. John Barr, then president of the recently formed (1985) Veterans For Peace happened to be present. As Ken told it, Barr was a "classic, tough, gravel-voiced Marine, built like a brick" and he said to Ken, "You're a Marine, right?" "Yessir!" Ken replied. "You *will* join Veterans For Peace and you *will* enjoy it!" Col. Barr ordered. And Ken was active with VFP from then on.

In 1999 he moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico. In 2001 the VFP National Convention was held in Albuquerque and Ken was inspired to start a chapter in Santa Fe.

I got to know and love Ken through our mutual membership

in VFP. In the last 16 years we spent a lot of time as comrades on solidarity missions overseas and during civil resistance actions here in the states. My partner, Ellen Davidson, now a member of the VFP Board of Directors, was almost always with us taking pictures and being part of the action. Even though she was over 20 years younger, Ken affectionately called her "Mom." He used to say we were like family.

In 2013 and 2017, "the Major," as he was affectionately called, joined VFP solidarity missions resisting Israeli violence in Palestine. He went on multiple veterans' delegations to stand with local people resisting U.S. domination in Okinawa and Korea and at Standing Rock during a bitter North Dakota winter. We were with thousands of U.S. veterans who came to support indigenous resistance to the oil pipeline being illegally built through their land.

In 2019, Ken and I were invited by Ireland Veterans For Peace to come to the "Emerald Isle" along with a delegation (Ray McGovern, Mike Hanes, Enya Anderson, Mike Ferner, Ellen Davidson, Chris Smiley) of U.S. Veterans For Peace to stand for Irish neutrality, to oppose and expose the U.S. war machine and a subservient Irish government that allowed U.S. military planes loaded with troops and weapons to land at Shannon Airport. The planes, troops and weapons were headed to and from places like Afghanistan, Iraq, and other operations of U.S. wars (at that time the U.S. was involved in hostilities in 14 countries). This was in blatant violation of Irish neutrality, not to mention international law.

On St. Patrick's Day of that year, in the early morning, with the blessing, support and encouragement of VFP Ireland, Ken



and I crawled under the outermost fence and then cut through the inner fence and barbed wire and 82-year-old Major Ken and I crawled through the ruptured fence and walked onto the tarmac of Shannon airport. We headed toward three American planes parked on the far end of the tarmac. Our purpose was, if not to rid Ireland of the snakes, then to confront and expose the U.S. military that were poisoning Irish neutrality as they landed transport planes at Shannon. We carried a banner, "U.S. Military Veterans Say: Respect Irish Neutrality: U.S. War Machine Out of Shannon!"

After about 20 minutes on the tarmac, the Irish Garda (police) arrived and we were civilly arrested (no handcuffs) and subsequently spent that night in jail and the next 13 days in Limerick prison on remand. Our passports were taken by the authorities under the pretext that if we left Ireland we might not come back for trial and so we spent the next eight-and-a-half months in Ireland before being allowed to leave with our returned passports.

"Two elderly U.S. veterans" arrested for protesting military use of Shannon in violation of Irish neutrality became newsworthy and we made the most of it. Our pictures were in the papers, on TV and we did several radio interviews. The public, the vast majority of whom support Irish neutrality, loved it.

As it turned out we went all over Ireland, much of that on long walks we called "Boots on the Ground for Freedom." We spoke about the importance of Irish neutrality and the destruction the U.S. military was causing not only to life, but also to the environment. Ken loved walking and kept a walking discipline all his life. We walked an average of 15 kilometers daily, so it fit right in. Ken and I both love animals but Ken is especially fond of dogs and missed his dog Wiley

back home in the New Mexico high desert. Every time we came upon someone walking their dog, Ken, without fail, would have to stop and tell the owner what a beautiful dog that was and give the dog one of the treats he always carried.

We also dropped huge banners from bridges across highways and in Dublin. All this with enthusiastic support from the Irish public and a good number of Irish politicians in the Dáil Eireann and the Seanad.

There was a huge campaign both in Ireland and in the U.S. to get us home. As December approached it became "Let them go home for Christmas." We both had fallen in love with Ireland and with the people, their heartfelt hospitality, warmth, intelligence, and spirit. We established lasting friendships and mutual respect with people in the Irish antiwar, pro-neutrality movement and with large segments of the Irish public. People were happy to give us shelter and we became very close with many. Then Members of the European Parliament Clare Daly and Mick Wallace became close friends and worked ceaselessly helping us get our passports back so we could go home.

When we spoke publicly or were interviewed, we were not shy about calling out what U.S. troops and their weapons were doing to women, children and families in Iraq and Afghanistan and to the environment, and our Irish audiences were receptive. Being U.S. veterans who spoke truthfully and took a stand for Irish neutrality endeared us to the Irish, I believe. Over a million children have died or been killed because of U.S. war-making. As fathers, veterans, and human beings, Ken and I felt the death of even one child, let alone multiple thousands, is not worth war. Nothing is. There was no moral, ethical, or legal excuse for U.S. wars of aggression, nor for a

corrupt and subservient Irish government that was betraying precious Irish neutrality by allowing U.S. military planes and troops to transport through Shannon.

We also knew the Irish Air Navigation Order (Carriage of Munitions of War, Weapons and Dangerous Goods) prohibits the transport of weapons of war without an exemption. Of course, the U.S. government guaranteed that none of the thousands of U.S. planes since 2001 carrying soldiers (and prisoners bound for Guantánamo on CIA rendition flights) had any weapons (or prisoners) on board.

As a senior member of the Garda testified at our trial in 2022, to his knowledge not one of the thousands of U.S. military transports landing at Shannon had ever been searched for weapons!

Ken said during an interview in Limerick, "The U.S. military is essentially using Shannon Airport as a U.S. base and the result of that is death and destruction throughout the Middle East and North Africa. I find it particularly heart-rending that some of this material goes to support the Saudi attacks in Yemen where there are over a million people on the verge of starvation, and after what Ireland has been through in the 19th century in terms of starvation, I find it particularly tragic, bitterly ironic that Ireland should be complicit in the starvation of over a million people."

Some of Ken's outstanding VFP manifestations have been participation in the 2009 Gaza Freedom March; the December 2010 mass arrests at the White House, followed by participation in the March 2011 mass arrests at the Capitol with VFP and IVAW, and the March 2011 arrests at the Free Bradley Manning protest at Quantico, Virginia. He was a participant in the 2011 Freedom Flotilla, attempting to break the illegal blockade of Gaza, and was arrested in Athens, Greece, hunger striking at the U.S. Embassy protesting the arrest of the captain of the U.S. Boat to Gaza; Ken was an essential part of the VFP Nuclear Abolition Working Group and co-authored the excellent VFP Nuclear Posture Review. In 2023 he was arrested protesting drone warfare at Holloman AFB in New Mexico. He was a dedicated editor of *Peace & Planet News* from the paper and the website's beginning.

On a personal note, I will never forget the night, Ken, WWII infantry veteran, Jay Wenk, and myself spent behind bars in New York City's Manhattan Detention Complex, commonly known as "the Tombs." We had been arrested with others for standing for our right as veterans to be at the NYC Veterans Memorial at what-



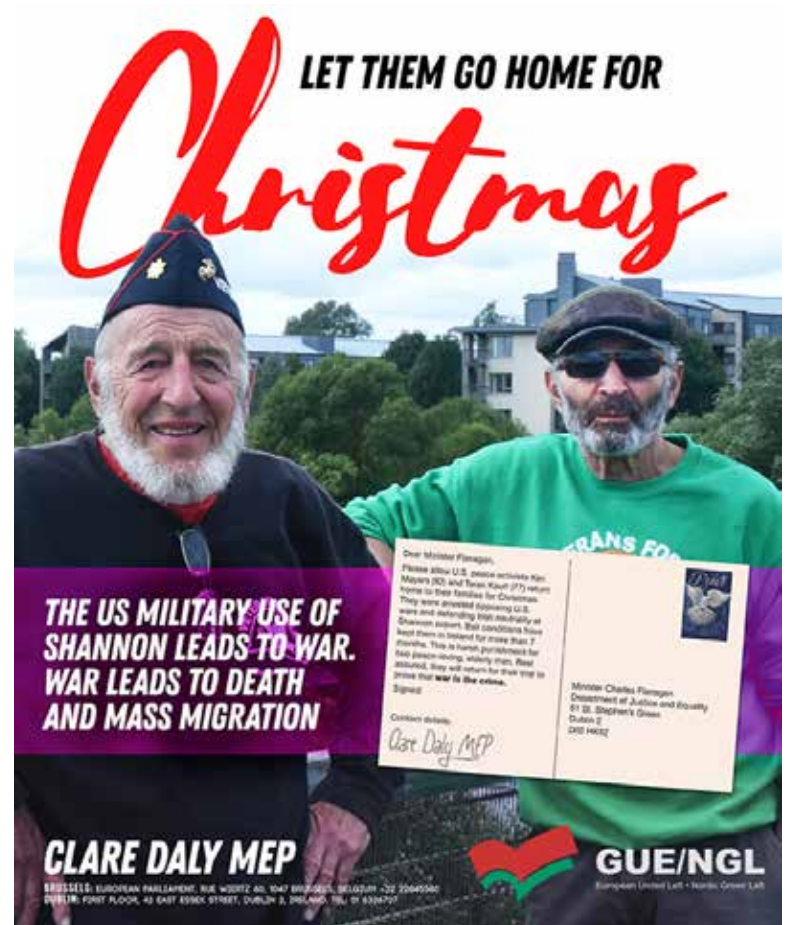
ever hour. Ken, Jay, and I were put in the same cell together because we were older vets. But after we were booked and sent downstairs, the cops on duty that night seemed to be in sympathy with us and they shared some cookies they were munching on before we got locked in our cell. There were about 12 of us originally led into the jail before booking. "What the fuck you guys doing arresting veterans?" the desk sergeant yelled to the arresting officers as we were led in in handcuffs. Ken and Jay, both with great sense of humor just naturally without effort charmed the cops in the Tombs, a place that is notorious for its dungeon-like quality and for guards that it was wise not to mess with. Ken had a beautiful baritone voice, and Jay and I sang with him as we passed the night in the cell. At one point getting on toward morning a black female guard joined us in singing "Down by the Riverside (Ain't Gonna Study War No More)."

What was always outstanding about Ken Mayers was the ex-

ample he set for many in VFP of dedication to our antiwar mission and for the kindness, nonviolence and respect with which he treated everyone, friend or foe.

When asked, at age 87, why he remains active year after year after year, Ken replied, "I get asked this question a lot, and I have several answers. I do it in part simply because I can. I do it in hope of helping create a better world for my children and grandchildren to inhabit. I do it because, as a former instrument of terrible national policies, I need to make amends. But when asked how I can keep doing it after 58 years of frustrating inability to make much of a difference, I fall back on two factors: 1) I love the work and I love the people I'm working with; and 2) the world is a little less depressing when you are trying to make things a little better."

Ken Mayers was without exaggeration one of the most admired, loved, and respected people, not only in VFP but among many in the peace movement and beyond. I still miss him dearly.



Slow Motion Ethnic Cleansing in Hebron

Palestinian boy passes through one of the ubiquitous checkpoints in Hebron. Photo: Ellen Davidson

By Ken Jones

Tell our story!” the man in the checkpoint cage yelled, in English. He and a crowd of Palestinian Muslim men were jammed together waiting to be checked out, one at a time, by an Israeli soldier in a glass booth so they could go into Hebron’s Ibrahim Mosque to pray. Such daily and routine humiliation is the hallmark of the Israeli occupation.

I was in Hebron (Al-Khalil) for two weeks recently as part of a Community Peacemaker Team (CPT) delegation. Every day, we accompanied or heard testimony from people who were living under the guns of the Is-

raeli Occupation Forces (IOF) and the aggressive hostility of the 800 settlers who claim that the city of 200,000 was given to them by their god. Every night, I kept a blog trying to capture one of the many stories we heard of the oppression.

Hebron is in the southern part of the West Bank. It hasn’t gotten the genocidal Gaza treatment that Jenin, Tulkarem, and Nur Shams are now getting. But, as someone said to me, “We are waiting our turn.” It may be that the tanks and bombs will come to Hebron too, but at the moment, what is happening there is the decades-long grind of military occupation and settler colonialism.

The stories we heard are gruesome. And everyone has

one. Most men have been taken to prison and tortured. It’s common to have your home broken into in the middle of the night by soldiers who yell, beat everyone, and kidnap fathers, sons and daughters, taking them away to unknown locations, with no charges, and for an undetermined time. Entire homes are demolished regularly. Land is stolen. Movement is restricted. Surveillance is constant and pervasive. These stories don’t make the news. They have become too normalized.

Here are a couple of stories that may give a glimpse of what daily life is like in Hebron.

One day, a 20-year-old woman told us about her year in prison. She recounted the horribly dirty and crowded conditions, the scarcity and bad quality of the food, the strip searches, the beatings, the constant verbal abuse.

She said the hardest thing that she witnessed was when women from Gaza were brought in. They wore bloody clothes and their hijabs had been stripped away from them. They were given no beds, nothing to clean themselves with. They were given dirty clothes that had been deliberately contaminated with lice. When they went to the bathroom, they were taken by male soldiers.

Then she told us the story of Oct 7, 2024, the one year “memorial” of the Gazan attack on Israelis. An officer entered women’s rooms and gave them 30 seconds to cover themselves before soldiers came in. When the soldiers came, they put zip ties on the women’s hands, blindfolded them, and took them out. They made them lie face down on muddy ground, beat them, cursed hatefully at them, and brought police dogs out to terrorize them. While this was going on, soldiers went into their cells, took all of their clothes, and set off tear gas grenades in their cells. Then they put the women back in their cells.

On another day, an older man who was living in a family home handed down through generations told us of the daily harassment he has been subjected to by settlers living next to his house. Protected by the IOF, they are taking pieces of his land every day. They have poisoned his sheep, stolen his olives, and destroyed over 250 olive trees.

His home is frequently used for family gatherings. During one of these recent gatherings, a large group of settlers burst into the house and started assaulting people. Some of them were dressed as soldiers. There were many injuries, windows were broken, and cars damaged. Then they stopped an ambulance from getting to the house.

Settlers have attacked his family in the fields and farm with stones, have brandished guns, and beaten them with sticks. They have driven jeeps right into the house, dumped bulldozers full of trash at their front door. Soldiers have tear gassed the inside of their home and flown drones overhead frequently.

The story we heard at the village of Um Al-Khair in the South Hebron Hills is emblematic of what is happening all over the West Bank. The village consists largely of descendants of refugees from the 1948 Nakba.

Immediately next to the village is a settlement of some 500 Israeli families and nearby, a military base. The teens from the settlement act as front-line vigilantes. They roam around with sticks and pepper spray making life miserable and tense for the people of the village. They have broken into homes and beaten women, damaged the village water pump, and even herded sheep right into village homes.

Whenever the villagers complain to the police about such attacks, the police say they have been told by the settlers that the teens are being attacked by the Palestinians. The police threaten to arrest the villagers if they keep making these calls.

We were walked to a recently demolished house where a couple of young Palestinian men were sitting, looking sadly at the ruins. Three rooms and a water tank were all jumbled up in piles. One of the men told us his 60-year-old mother, who owned the house, had been thrown to the ground when she yelled about her house being destroyed. There was nothing the son or mother could do

continued on next page ...

‘Stop the Madness of Militarism and War’

Open Letter on Behalf of the Palestinian Children of Gaza and Children Everywhere in the World Suffering from the Violence of Hunger and War

In Gaza this week over 400 innocent Palestinians, including 100 children, have been killed overnight as Israel unilaterally ended the ceasefire deal without any warning. This continuing genocide and ethnic cleansing policy (of the rogue Israeli government) of the Palestinian people is not only fully known by all the governments around the world but is supported by money, arms and silent complicity of many governments, particularly USA/Britain/European Union leaders.

There is a propaganda war against the truth being told of the over 55 wars going on in the world in which millions of children are dying as a result of militarism and war. The political leadership of Europe is now planning to increase defense spending of 2.5% so that they can continue to fund wars around the world. The rearmament of Europe and its nuclear weapons built on whipped-up fear and enmity amongst people will lead to world war, not peace and reconciliation amongst the human family.

What to do to save all our children from the madness of militarism and war? Each of us no matter where we live must raise our voices to say, “No, we will not allow these mad militarists or armed extremists to destroy any one’s children.” Refuse to hate, refuse to kill each other



Mairead Maguire. Photo: Ellen Davidson

and demand instead dialogue and negotiation. Today in Gaza, the starvation of 2.5 million people, by Israeli policies, is continuing, and it is killing the children. We see it and it is breaking our hearts!!!

As the children of Gaza are hungry and injured with bombs (an actual Israeli government policy), I have decided I too must be hungry with them, as I can in good conscience do no other. From today I will fast and pray, fast and pray, that I in watching so much purposely imposed destruction of children, will not allow my own heart to be hardened against the killers of little children, but will stay “gentle” and demand of our governments and armed militarists: Stop the madness of poverty, cruelty, militarism and war.

In the season of Ramadan and Lent, let us join in fasting and prayer, in solidarity for a world fit for all our children built on non-killing, peace, and justice. It is possible, and it starts with us teaching and living the science of peace not war.

—Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Laureate,
March 21, 2025

Hebron

... continued from previous page

about it. Their family is now crowded in with a nextdoor neighbor. In June, Israel had demolished 10 homes in one morning in the village.

We were told that Israeli law forbids people from rebuilding a demolished home on the same site. There is, in fact, a settler organization in Israel called Regavin that flies drones over newly demolished homes to report to the military any Palestinian attempt to rebuild. Still, the son and villagers are planning to rebuild the home.

Our village guide talked about the trauma of it all, especially for the kids. He said, "It is very hard for us to live in this condition. These people are not neighbors, they don't care about us at all. They treat their dogs better than they treat us." He worried about the mental health of his five young daughters and all of his friends living there.

We walked down to the paved road that was put in for the settlement. It was put over a dirt road that had been there since Jordan controlled this territory many years ago. Israel now defined the paved road as the border of the village, beyond which they and their goats and sheep were not allowed to "trespass." Simple as that, their pasture land was stolen. Soldiers also put a gate at the beginning of the road so that they can close off entry into and exit from the village whenever they choose.

We walked past some saplings, supplied by the Jewish National Fund, that settlers had just planted right next to villagers' houses. The obvious purpose of planting the trees was to establish a claim to the land.

We saw the electric lines leading to the settlement. The villagers can't use that electricity. They have power only from a small number of solar panels. We also saw the now repaired water pump from which they are allowed to draw only two days a week, for a total of six hours. We saw the surveillance camera up on a pole overlooking the village. "They are watching us all the time," our guide said.

We were told about the sounds of gunfire from the military firing range that

was put illegally on their land. I imagined how threatening that must be, especially for the children.

All of this pressure in Um Al-Khair is one big systematic slow-motion ethnic cleansing campaign, designed to push the villagers off their land. The intention is not just to demolish homes, land rights, and mental health. It's meant to demolish hope.

But from what I could see, Palestinians will never give up hope. Every story of injustice we heard was told with a spirit of determined resilience and resistance—sumud, as it is called there. No Palestinian we met was planning to leave or submit. Everyone appeared to be carrying on with life, with joy and humor, and with healthy relationships, despite the danger and indignities they were suffering. They refuse to live in fear. As one person said, "That's what they want, for us to be afraid. They want us to leave. We will not fear and we will stay until this occupation is over."

As has often happened to me when I visit places that are on the receiving side of U.S.-sponsored violence and oppression, I was struck during this visit by the strong and enviable character of the Palestinians we met. They are not defeated, their spirits are not broken. They are warm, generous, dignified. I always felt safe and cared for around them, even though I, as an American, had no right to expect such treatment. The only times I felt fear and coldness were when I was around Israeli soldiers or settlers. That's telling.

The stories and voices of Palestinians have always been intentionally suppressed by the powers that be in the U.S. and the West. As has the truth about how Palestinians have been treated for over a hundred years. The genocide in Gaza has burst that bubble of shadows and lies and revealed the ugly truth of the Zionist project all over Palestine. It is a cancer.

Hebron is still a vibrant place, bustling with life. May its countless stories be heard, may its occupation end, may its people be free. And the same for all of Palestine.

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Ken Jones is an organizer for the War Industry Resisters Network living in Asheville, NC. He can be contacted at kwjj1949@gmail.com.



Many Hebron residents must use rooftop ladders to access their homes, as they are not allowed to enter the street where their front doors are. Photo: Ellen Davidson

Veterans Demand End to Weapons Sales to Israel

In a Feb. 11, 2024, letter to the Inspector-General of the U.S. State Department, a national veterans' organization demanded the State Department terminate weapons shipments to Israel and called on the Inspector General to investigate alleged criminal acts by senior Biden Administration officials in violation of U.S. law, including ratified treaties, which are the supreme law of the land.

Josh Paul, former State Department senior official who resigned over weapons shipments to Israel said, "The secretary and all relevant officials under his purview should take this letter from Veterans For Peace with the utmost seriousness. It is a stark reminder of the importance of abiding by the laws and policies that relate to arms transfers."

Mike Ferner, then-VFP national director, said, "Just as any good soldier can recognize when they are given an unlawful order, we believe some State Department staff are horrified at the orders they're given and will decide to uphold the law, find the courage to speak out, and demand an end to the carnage. VFP enthusiastically supports Josh Paul for what he did and we believe the public does, too. The IDF has killed over 30,000 Palestinians and is utterly destroying Gaza. These actions amount to genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, and VFP wants them investigated."

No 'Israel Exception'

"Unless no one in the entire U.S. State Department has seen the news in the last four months, they have to be aware of Israel's illegal activity. But just in case, our letter to the Inspector General spells it out in chapter and verse. We believe the State Department—from the Secretary down to every staff person working on arms transfers to Israel—is in criminal violation of U.S. statutes regarding how U.S. weaponry can be used. There's no 'Israel exception' that makes it okay for U.S. weapons to be used in genocide even if it's labeled self-defense," Ferner concluded.

The letter from Veterans For Peace alleges violations by the U.S. government and its officials of:

- The Conventional Arms Transfer Policy, which prohibits U.S. weapons transfers when it's likely they will be used to commit genocide; crimes against humanity; and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, including attacks intentionally directed against civilian objects or civilians protected or other serious violations of international humanitarian or human rights law, including serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against children. Dozens of authoritative complaints and referrals made by hospital administrators in Gaza, as well as by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Palestine Authority, South Africa, Turkey, Médecins sans Frontières,



UNRWA, UNICEF, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Norwegian Refugee Council and the World Food Programme, have confirmed that there is an ongoing human rights and humanitarian disaster due to Israel's cutoff of water and electricity, deliberate destruction of sewage infrastructure and delaying of aid shipments by Israeli forces.

- The Foreign Assistance Act, which forbids the provision of assistance to a government that "engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights."

- Arms Export Control Act, which says countries that receive U.S. military aid can only use weapons for legitimate self-defense and internal security. Israel's genocidal campaign in Gaza goes way beyond self-defense and internal security.

- The U.S. War Crimes Act, which forbids grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, including willful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, and unlawful deportation or transfer, perpetrated by the Israeli Occupying Forces.

- The Leahy Law, which prohibits the U.S. Government from using funds for assistance to units of foreign security forces where there is credible information implicating that unit in the commission of gross violations of human rights.

- The Genocide Convention Implementation Act, enacted to implement U.S. obligations under the Genocide Convention, which provides for criminal penalties for individuals who commit or incite others to commit genocide.

Human rights attorney Terry Lodge, who drafted the VFP letter, pointed out what he called "the State Department's double standard to determine war criminality," citing a December 6, 2023, determination by Secretary Blinken, "that the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) of Sudan had 'committed crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.' As horrible as the crimes of the RSF may be, they pale compared to what Israel is doing in Gaza."

If a Tree Falls in the Forest

By W.D. Ehrhart

Here is a poem from Palestinian poet Mosab abu Toha's newest book, *Forest of Noise* (Knopf, 2024):

Ramadan 2025

*Around that dinner table, missing are the chairs
where my mother, my father,
and my little sister used to sit with us on
Fridays,
and where my siblings and their kids
used to drink tea at sunset when they visited.*

*No one is here anymore. Not even sunset.
In the kitchen, the table is missing.
In the house, the kitchen is missing.
In the house, the house is missing.
Only rubble stays, waiting for a sunrise.*

Forest of Noise is Mosab's second collection of poems. Back in the spring of 2022, when his first collection, *Things You May Find Hidden in My Ear* (City Lights) came out, I wrote an essay about the book and Mosab called "A Farewell to Arms?" Then in late 2023, after the merciless October 7 attack by Hamas and the massive and unrelenting retaliation by Israeli Defense Forces, I wrote a second essay about Mosab called "A Poet in Palestine."

Much has happened since then, both in the so-called "Holy Land" (as ironic a misnomer as ever there was) and in the life of Mosab abu Toha who, after managing to get himself and his wife and three children out of Gaza alive, though not before being arrested and beaten by the IDF, is now temporarily living in the United States again.

He has lived here before, having been a visiting poet at Harvard and earning an MFA from Syracuse. One of his sons is a natural-born U.S. citizen. But while he and his family are safe—at least until the Emperor Trump strips Mostafa of his citi-

zenship and deports the whole family—the bad news just keeps coming.

Many of his former students, dear friends, and even family members have been killed by the IDF, not because they were in any way connected to Hamas, but merely because they were "in the way" of the massive and indiscriminate firepower unleashed by the Israeli military. No one even bothers to employ the euphemism "collateral damage"; they're just dead Palestinians, which reminds me of something attributed to General Philip Sheridan: "The only good Indians I ever saw were dead."

The most recent bad news comes not in the form of literal death, but is a kind of intellectual death. Back in 2016, Mosab set out to create an English-language free library in Gaza. He named it the Edward Said Public Library after the late Palestinian-American Columbia University professor of literature and Middle East expert.

With books donated by friends and supporters from the U.S. and Europe—in spite of petty hurdles put up by Israeli Customs officials who regularly turned away books sent for the library, including a box of books sent by my Veterans For Peace comrade Chuck Rossi that was returned to him—Mosab was able to open a branch in Beit Lahia, and then another in Gaza City.

Mosab eventually learned that the library's branch in Gaza City was badly damaged several months ago. Then in January, when Palestinians were finally allowed to return to northern Gaza, Mosab got word that the original branch in Beit Lahia has been completely destroyed.

He himself says, "I'm committed to rebuilding the library, its two branches, and even expand the project to build one in Rafah and another in Khan Younis. My only two concerns now are whether I can get books into Gaza and also whether I will find children who are convinced that

this is safe and important enough to visit the library, especially after all the trauma and losses each of us experienced."

Meanwhile, as *Forest of Noise* so eloquently and poignantly attests, Mosab abu Toha continues to write and offer to anyone who is listening his own powerful poetry. Here are a few more of my favorites:

My Son Throws a Blanket over My Daughter

Gaza, May 2021

*At night, at home, we sit on the floor,
close to each other
far from the windows and the red
lights of bombs. Our backs bang on the
walls
whenever the house shakes.
We stare at each other's faces,
scared yet happy
that, so far, our lives have been spared.
The walls wake up from their fitful sleep,
no arms to wipe at their bleary eyes.
Flies gather around the only lit ceiling
lamp
for warmth in the bitter night,
cold except when missiles hit
and burn up houses and roads and trees.
The neighborhood next to us,
where Yazzan learned to ride his bike,
scorched.
Every time we hear a bomb
falling from an F-16 or an F-35,
our lives panic. Our lives freeze
somewhere in between, confused
where to head next:
a graveyard, a hospital,
a nightmare.
I keep my shivering hand
on my wristwatch,
ready to remove the battery
if needed.
My four-year-old daughter, Yaffa,
wearing a pink dress given to her by a
friend,
hears a bomb explode. She gasps,*



*covers her mouth with her dress's ruffles.
Yazzan, her five-and-a-half-year-old
brother,
grabs a blanket warmed by his sleepy
body.
He lays the blanket on his sister.
You can hide now, he assures her.*

Love Poem

*To Maram
When I sit to write,
you know that
and you distract our kids
from my writing room.
When I read the poem to you
and ask, What do you think?
You say, It's beautiful,
though you know
that frustrates me.
Beautiful is not enough,
not next to you,
not next to the poem.
I'm asking you about
what makes my poem a poem,
just like when you ask me
what makes you my love:
your tears, your scolds when I spend
too much time writing my poems,
when the tea grows cold,
your jealousy of the poem,
the way you searched for me
when I was kidnapped
(our daughter, Yaffa, told me
all about it when I returned),
how I searched for you all—
your carrying our home, our destroyed
home,
with you in your memories
(I forget so quickly
and that's why I take a lot of photos),
your hand holding the pencil with me
when my fingers freeze out of fear,
your name,
which reminds me there is a goal.*

W.D. Ehrhart is a poet, writer, scholar, and Vietnam veteran. He received the Purple Heart Medal and the Navy Combat Action Ribbon for his service. He is the author of more than 30 books, including *Vietnam Perkasee: A Combat Marine Memoir*, *Passing Time: Memoir of a Vietnam Veteran Against the War*, *Busted: A Vietnam Veteran in Nixon's America*, and *Thank You for Your Service: Collected Poems*. His most recent book is *What We Can and Can't Afford: Essays on Vietnam, Patriotism, and American Life*.

For the last time, Hossam Shabat, from northern Gaza

Remembering Hossam Shabat: Gaza Journalist Killed by Israel Was Placed on "Hit List" Before His Death

"If you're reading this, it means I have been killed—most likely targeted-by the Israeli occupation forces. When this all began, I was only 21 years old—a college student with dreams like anyone else. For past 18 months, I have dedicated every moment of my life to my people. I documented the horrors in northern Gaza minute by minute, determined to show the world the truth they tried to bury. I slept on pavements, in schools, in tents-anywhere I could. Each day was a battle for survival. I endured hunger for months, yet I never left my people's side. By God, I fulfilled my duty as a journalist. I risked everything to report the truth, and now, I am finally at rest—something I haven't known in the past 18 months. I did all this because I believe in the Palestinian cause. I believe this land is ours, and it has been the highest honor of my life to die defending it and serving its people.



"I ask you now: do not stop speaking about Gaza. Do not let the world look away.

"Keep fighting, keep telling our stories-until Palestine is free."

"For the last time, Hossam Shabat, from northern Gaza."

War Is the True Enemy

America's revival will begin when it finally embraces peace

By William Astore

Arguably the biggest problem in America today is that the government remains on a wartime footing. The possibility of America being a normal country in normal times, at peace, is simply never mentioned. In current politics and in the mainstream media, there is no vision of America being at peace with the world. Ever.

There is always an enemy, usually plural. Russia. China. Iran. North Korea. The inchoate threat of terror and terrorists. Islamist extremism. All these and more are cited by the “experts” in the “national security state” as requiring a military response. If some kind of peace deal is orchestrated for the Russia-Ukraine War, America and its war machine will immediately pivot to Asia. Or the Middle East. Or perhaps Africa. Or all three.

I’m amazed when friends tell me they’re concerned about U.S. isolationism, usually in relation to the alleged U.S. withdrawal from (or even betrayal of) Europe in light of the Russia-Ukraine War. Their message to me is simple: America must keep sending weapons and intel to Ukraine until Russia and Putin are defeated, “as long as it takes.”

The “it” is left undefined, but apparently “it” refers to an unqualified Ukrainian victory over Russia, followed by Ukraine’s eventual admission into NATO. Whether that “it” is even possible—whether that “it” could well lead to a nuclear exchange—doesn’t seem to matter because “We’re at war.”

I don’t know how anyone can think America will return to isolationism when the U.S. has 800 military bases globally and a vision of global reach, global power, and total dominance everywhere. And when America spends more on its military than the next 10 countries combined. Dominating the globe isn’t exactly consistent with isolationism.

The problem with all the war rhetoric, the war narrative, the war framing, the warrior and lethality talk, is what it enables and facilitates, which is atrocity. Waste. Destruction. War is no way of life at all. As Ike said, the persistence of war is humanity crucifying itself on a cross of iron.

War is immensely corrosive to democracy. It is the enemy of freedom. Just listen to James Madison:

“Of all the enemies of true liberty, war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded, because it comprises and develops the germ of every other. War is the parent of armies; from these proceed debt and taxes; and armies, and debts, and taxes are the known instruments for bringing the many under the domination of the few. In war, too, the discretionary power of the Executive is extended; its influence in



The Dead Soldier, 1832, National Army Museum, London.

dealing out offices, honors and emoluments is multiplied; and all the means of seducing the minds, are added to those of subduing the force, of the people. The same malignant aspect in republicanism may be traced in the inequality of fortunes, and the opportunities of fraud, growing out of a state of war, and in the degeneracy of manner and of morals, engendered in both. No nation can preserve its freedom in the midst of continual warfare ...”

If you’re concerned about authoritarianism, if you’re concerned about maintaining and strengthening freedom, if you’re concerned about combatting corruption and waste, if you’re concerned about America’s huge deficits, stopping war should be your number one concern.

War is a terrible thing, and a state of war enables all kinds of butchery. Just ask the indigenous peoples of America, or the peoples of Palestine today. Even genocide can

be disguised as a wartime exigency, a wartime necessity. How many times throughout history has the declaration, “We’re at war!” been used to justify the most heinous crimes against humanity? Even the Nazis hid behind wartime exigency to justify the mass euthanasia of the old, the mentally ill, and other forms of “life unworthy of life.”

The true revival of America will begin when this country declares itself to be at peace with the world. Until then, precipitous decline will continue for as long as our government remains at (and continues to celebrate) war.

William Astore, a retired lieutenant colonel (USAF) and professor of history, is a TomDispatch regular and a senior fellow at the Eisenhower Media Network, an organization of critical veteran military and national security professionals. His personal blog is Bracing Views.

Stop Politicians Profiting from War

By Rashida Tlaib

With U.S. weapons, the Israeli military has violated the temporary ceasefire in Gaza, killing over 400 people—including over 170 children—the first day they resumed intense bombing. Additionally, the Trump Administration bombed Yemen, killing children and other civilians in one of the most impoverished countries in the world.

Since October 2023, our government has sent over \$18 billion to fund the ethnic cleansing and extermination of Palestinians. Each year, most of my colleagues in Congress also vote to pass yet another record-breaking military budget. Even though the Pentagon has failed to pass an audit for seven years in a row, last year the Pentagon budget was \$895 billion, nearly \$1 trillion taxpayer dollars. And now, congressional Republicans are attempting to add another \$150 billion to the Pentagon budget and \$175 billion to the Department of Homeland Security to help carry out Donald Trump’s cruel and illegal mass deportations.

Republicans are trying to cut hundreds of billions of dollars from essential programs that millions of Americans rely on, including Medicaid and food stamps ... while adding hundreds of billions of our taxpayer dollars to the military budget. This is impossible to justify when our neighbors are struggling to put food on the table, fighting to keep a roof over their heads, and rationing their medication.



Why do we always have money for war, but not enough to feed the poor, as Tupac Shakur wrote decades ago? Part of the problem is the deep ties between lawmakers and the weapons industry. Half of the annual military budget lines the pockets of military contractors that profit off of mass death. Now, many of these contracting corporations have proposed taking over mass detentions and deportations, as well.

Weapons corporations like Raytheon, Boeing, and Lockheed Martin spend millions to re-elect congresspeople who serve on committees that determine military funding. Additionally, many members of Congress and their spouses invest directly in weapons contractor stocks, so when they vote to send more bombs or send our loved ones to war, they profit personally. Across political party lines, too many of

my fellow congresspeople are incentivized to push for military aggression rather than diplomacy. To stop this, I introduced the Stop Politicians Profiting from War Act.

As of last year, more than 50 members of Congress owned stock in military contractors. It’s shameful that my colleagues continue to funnel billions of U.S. tax dollars to get rich from military contractor profits while voting to pass more funding to bomb people. This is corruption and cruelty; our elected officials should not be able to profit off of death.

If passed, the Stop Politicians Profiting from War Act will prohibit members of Congress, their spouses, and their dependent children from having any financial interests in corporations that do business with the U.S. Department of Defense—including banning members from trading

defense stocks.

The executive director of Win Without War said: “Representative Tlaib’s bill is a vital step to breaking this cycle of war profiteering. If our leaders truly serve the public, they must put people over profits—not cash in on the wars they help wage.”

Most secretaries of Defense come directly from the weapons industry, which has spent over \$260 million on lobbying and \$56 million in direct campaign donations between 2022 and 2024. The organization Corporate Accountability explains: “The [weapons] industry employed 858 lobbyists in 2022—more than one for every member of Congress.”

Unfortunately, the weapons industry exerts incredible influence not just in our political system, but also in our education system. Many U.S. universities have boards of trustees that include military corporations’ executives, who have been pressuring schools to crack down on campus speech and suppress antiwar student efforts while the Trump administration is simultaneously deporting student protesters without cause or due process.

We can’t let our institutions prioritize the profits of military corporations over people’s needs. I’ve instead pushed for giving direct cash assistance to people and ending childhood poverty in the United States. State Senator Nina Turner and I wrote: “In a country that wastes trillions of dollars on war while continuing to defund our social safety net, we know that poverty is a policy choice.”

Instead of spending more on war than any other country in the world, we need to

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The Importance of Resistance

By Doug Rawlings

Point?" she would ask, although in the words of singer/songwriter John Prine, "a question ain't really a question if you know the answer too." She being our 16-year-old daughter responding to some fatherly rant about her behavior. She knew how to get my goat and inherently resist orders that she thought were ridiculous or ignorant. She is now the mother of two teenage daughters herself, but, more important, is also a driving force in her community to work for immigrants' rights. Her own sense of the need to resist grew to encompass others' rights to also resist. Of course her parents were children of the '50s, '60s etc. so they, too, knew the power of standing up for others. This legacy of principled resistance must continue.

Look at the courageous university students standing up for human rights today, very much in the spirit of Mario Savio during the Berkeley Free Speech Movement.

These students are carrying forth his legacy right now. Here's what Savio said on December 2, 1964, while he was standing on the steps of Berkeley College's Sproul Hall:

"There is a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part! You can't even passively take part! And you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels ... upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop! And you've got to indicate to the people who run it, to the people who own it, that unless you're free, the machine will be prevented from working at all!"

Oh yeah! Five years after that speech, which I wish I had listened to, I was a soldier in the Central Highlands of Vietnam coming to the realization that Savio's words also applied to us: we were literally considered "assets" that some officer could use to achieve his ends. We were not considered actual human beings. That realization was brought back home with many of us as we began to actively resist the very military forces that were being asked to enforce racist policies at home.

In 1968, "More than 160 black soldiers from Fort Hood refused to take part in riot-control operations in Chicago. The re-



Palestinian activist Mahmoud Khalil.

bellion—the largest in U.S. military history—began Friday night at the Texas base. Approximately 100 black GIs from the 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Brigade, First Armored Division, staged a sit-down demonstration to protest their orders to fly to Chicago the next day. At 3 a.m., the Division Commander, Major General Bowles, ordered them to disperse. He was met with cries of 'Fuck you!' from the men. The Provost Marshall was similarly received when he issued a direct order for them to board a plane to Chicago. By 6 a.m. some 60 troops were still demonstrating nonviolently near their barracks on Battalion Avenue. They were taken by Military Police to the Post Stockade" (Vietnam Full Disclosure, February 1, 2017).

So, are today's college students and active-duty soldiers resisting the same and even worse violence and oppression? Yes. The popular mainstream media were telling us back then that these so-called "flower children" were disgracing the very soldiers who were also rebelling. Not so, but this distortion of events was not unusual at the time. The powers-that-be were intent upon dividing the U.S. resistance movement as much as they could, but that movement, despite government oppression, helped end the Viet Nam war.

Today's students, facing arrests, expulsion and possible deportation from the fascist Trump regime, are putting themselves on the line to oppose the bloody Israeli genocide in Gaza and the West Bank. They are demanding their universi-

ties divest from supporting Israel and that the U.S. government stop sending billions of dollars worth of bombs and weapons that are killing thousands in Palestine.

Savio would be proud.

And today's mass media is even worse than it was back in Savio's time. They demonize idealistic and empathetic students as antisemitic, as brainwashed, as disrupters for the sake of disrupting. It's not only McCarthyism on steroids but Orwell's 1984 in real time.

It is up to all of us to keep the flames of resistance and truth alive in our hearts and in the hearts of those who are just now becoming aware of the need to resist oppression wherever it manifests itself.

We are in the midst of a technologically advanced totalitarian police state takeover of this country. We can't say we didn't see it coming. Based on bogus charges of antisemitism and supporting terror, students are being expelled, arrested, and deported for opposing a genocide in Gaza and the use of U.S. weapons to support that genocide.

It always starts with the students. Mahmoud Khalil, a brilliant Columbia graduate, was abducted by plainclothes Department of Homeland Security officers and taken from his eight months pregnant wife with no charges and no explanation. He is a green card holder with permanent residence, and yet was taken first to New Jersey and then to an ICE prison in Louisiana for possible deportation. In a statement made over the phone to family members, he put his detention in the context of the broader crackdown on immigrants: "Who has the right to have rights? It is certainly not the humans crowded into the cells here. It isn't the Senegalese man I met who has been deprived of his liberty for a year, his legal situation in limbo and his family an ocean away. It isn't the 21-year-old detainee I met, who stepped foot in this country at age nine, only to be deported without so much as a hearing.

"Justice escapes the contours of this nation's immigration facilities."

Khalil went on to connect his detention with the struggle for freedom in Palestine: "My arrest was a direct consequence of exercising my right to free speech as I advocated for a free Palestine and an end to the genocide in Gaza, which resumed in full force Monday night. ... I see in

my circumstances similarities to Israel's use of administrative detention—imprisonment without trial or charge—to strip Palestinians of their rights.

"I think of our friend Omar Khatib, who was incarcerated without charge or trial by Israel as he returned home from travel. I think of Gaza hospital director and pediatrician Dr. Hussam Abu Safiya, who was taken captive by the Israeli military on December 27 and remains in an Israeli torture camp today. For Palestinians, imprisonment without due process is commonplace."

He also noted the role of Columbia University in repressing student activism: "While I await legal decisions that hold the futures of my wife and child in the balance, those who enabled my targeting remain comfortably at Columbia University. Presidents Shafik, Armstrong, and Dean Yarhi-Milo laid the groundwork for the U.S. government to target me by arbitrarily disciplining pro-Palestinian students and allowing viral doxing campaigns—based on racism and disinformation—to go unchecked.

"Columbia targeted me for my activism, creating a new authoritarian disciplinary office to bypass due process and silence students criticizing Israel. Columbia surrendered to federal pressure by disclosing student records to Congress and yielding to the Trump administration's latest threats. My arrest, the expulsion or suspension of at least 22 Columbia students—some stripped of their BA degrees just weeks before graduation—and the expulsion of SWC President Grant Miner on the eve of contract negotiations, are clear examples."

And finally, Khalil recognized today's movement as part of a long tradition of student protest: "If anything, my detention is a testament to the strength of the student movement in shifting public opinion toward Palestinian liberation. Students have long been at the forefront of change—leading the charge against the Vietnam War, standing on the frontlines of the civil rights movement, and driving the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. Today, too, even if the public has yet to fully grasp it, it is students who steer us toward truth and justice.

"The Trump administration is targeting me as part of a broader strategy to suppress dissent. Visa-holders, green-card carriers, and citizens alike will all be targeted for their political beliefs. In the weeks ahead, students, advocates, and elected officials must unite to defend the right to protest for Palestine. At stake are not just our voices, but the fundamental civil liberties of all."

At times like this, "the Beloved Community" as Martin Luther King Jr. said, must be strong, demand justice, expose and resist Trump and Musk's oppressive dictatorship and keep truth alive. Above all, we must not be silent.

Doug Rawlings is a Viet Nam veteran and the author of four collections of poems: *Orion Rising*, *A G.I. Portrait*, *In the Shadow of the Annamese Mountains*, and *A Baker's Dozen (children's poems)*. He is a founding member and former poet laureate of *Veterans For Peace*.



Mario Savio

Surrendering

... continued from page 1

have always been complicit in the crimes of their times. They did not, until the world around them changed, speak out against the slaughter of Native Americans, the enslavement of Africans, the crushing of labor and socialist organizations at the turn of the 20th century and the purging of institutions, including the academy, during the Red Scare in the 1920s and 1930s, and later the witch hunts under McCarthyism. They turned on their students protesting the war in Vietnam in the 1960s as viciously as they are turning on them now.

Many of the dregs of the Trump administration are products of these elite academic institutions. I can assure you their children will also attend these schools despite their public denunciations.

Professor Katherine Franke, who taught at Columbia Law School for 25 years, recently lost her position at the university for defending Columbia students' right to protest in favor of a ceasefire of the Israeli slaughter in Gaza and for Columbia University to divest from Israel. She also condemned the spraying of pro-Palestinian protesters on the campus with a toxic chemical that left students hospitalized.

"Part of why I think Columbia was such an easy target—and it's not just Columbia, I think this is true for Harvard, for Yale, for the elite universities—is that the boards of trustees are no longer made up of people who are involved in education—committed to the educational mission, in some way professionally or other-

you grovel before a bully, it encourages the bully. And that's exactly what's happened here up until today, where they're still negotiating with the Trump administration on terms that the administration has set. And this university, I think, will never be the same if it survives at all."

Universities and colleges across the country have shut down free speech and squandered their academic integrity. They have brutalized, arrested, suspended and expelled faculty, administrators, and students that decry the genocide. They have called police to their campuses—in the case of Columbia three times—to arrest students, of-

ish dictator Francisco Franco and a rabid antisemite, formulated the act to target not only dissidents and communists, but also Jews. When the law was enacted, it was used to ban Eastern European Jewish Holocaust survivors from entering the U.S. due to their alleged sympathies with the Soviet Union.

"The irony of that is not lost on any of us, that these are laws that are at their core, deeply antisemitic, that are now being deployed in the name of protecting Jewish citizens or our foreign policy goals with the state of Israel," Franke said. "And that's the cynicism of this ad-

Columbia's violent suppression of protests and decision to lock down its campus, which is now surrounded by security checkpoints, paved the way for the abduction of Mahmoud Khalil.

ten charging them with trespassing. Following the lead of their authoritarian masters, they subjected students to internal surveillance. Columbia University, out front on the repression of its students, banned Students for Justice in Palestine and Jewish Voice for Peace a month after Israel's genocide in Gaza had begun in November 2023, when both organizations called for a ceasefire, long before the protests and encampments began.

Columbia's violent suppression of protests and decision to lock down its campus, which is now surrounded by security checkpoints, paved the way for the abduction of Mahmoud Khalil, who was a graduate student at the

ministration. They don't give a darn that there's that history. They're looking for every piece of power that they can get, every law, no matter how ugly that law may be. Even the laws that interned Japanese people during World War Two. I'm sure they would be more than happy to use those at some point."

James Luther Adams, my mentor at Harvard Divinity School, was in Germany in 1935 and 1936 until he was arrested and deported by the Gestapo. He worked with the underground anti-Nazi church, known as the Confessing Church, led by dissident clergy such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Adams saw how swiftly and cravenly German universities, which like ours were considered some of the best in the world, surrendered to the dictates of fascism and self-destructed.

The theologian and philosopher Paul Tillich, a close friend of Adams, was fired from his teaching post and blacklisted 10 weeks after the Nazis came to power in January 1933. Tillich's book *The Socialist Decision* was immediately banned by the Nazis. Tillich, a Lutheran pastor, along with the sociologist Karl Mannheim and the philosopher Max Horkheimer, who wrote *Eclipse of Reason*, which examines the rise of authoritarianism, were branded "enemies of the Reich," blacklisted and forced into exile. The 1933 "Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service" saw all Jewish professors dismissed. The vast majority of academics cowered in fear or, as with the case of the philosopher Martin Heidegger, joined the Nazi Party, which saw him appointed as the Rector of Freiburg University.

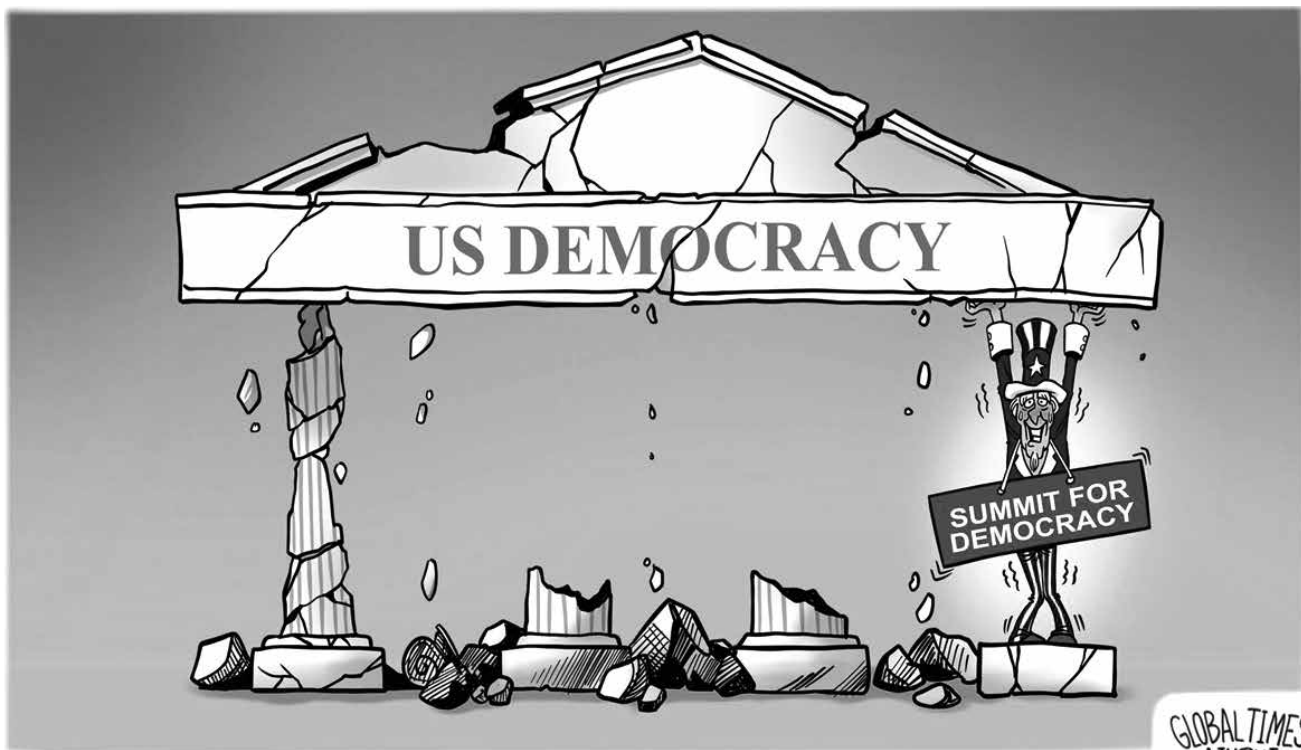
Adams saw in the Christian Right disturbing similarities with the German Christian Church, which was pro-Nazi. He was the first person I heard refer to the Christian Right as "Christian fascists." He also warned us about universities and academics which, if the country fell into authoritarianism, would debase themselves to protect their status and privileges. Few would speak out or defy authority.

"If the Nazis took over America, 60% of the Harvard faculty would happily begin their lectures with the Nazi salute," he quipped.

And this is where we are. None of the liberal institutions, including the universities, the commercial media and the Democratic Party, will defend us. The purges and silencing of our most courageous and accomplished intellectuals, writers, artists and journalists—begun before Trump's return to the White House—is being expedited.

Resistance will be left to us. Enemies of the state.

Chris Hedges is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, Presbyterian minister, author, and television host. His books include *America: The Farewell Tour*; *American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War on America*; *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning*. He previously worked for the Dallas Morning News, the Christian Science Monitor, and NPR, and hosted the Emmy-nominated RT America show On Contact.



wise—see themselves as custodians of the special role that the academy plays in a democracy," she told me.

"Instead, they are hedge fund managers, venture capitalists, corporate lawyers and in our case, arms manufacturers as well." She went on:

"And they see that responsibility is to protect only the endowment. I often describe Columbia—which is the largest residential landlord in New York City—as a real estate holding operation that has a side hustle of teaching classes. It has evolved over time into just a business that enjoys nonprofit status. And so when the pressure started here, there were no voices on the boards of trustees to say, 'Hey, wait a minute, we have to be the front line of resistance.' Or at a minimum, we have to defend our academic mission.' When I was sitting in my living room watching [former] president Minouche Shafik testify before that House committee ... I was upset because they mentioned me, but more importantly, the fact that president Shafik did not even begin to defend Columbia, its faculty, its students, our project, our history of being one of the premier universities in the world. Instead, she groveled before a bully. And we all know that when

School of International Public Affairs. He is a legal permanent resident. He did not commit a crime. But the university administration had already demonized and criminalized Khalil and the other students, many of whom are Jewish, who dared to protest the mass slaughter in Gaza.

The law in authoritarian states protects the criminality of the powerful. It revokes due process, basic freedoms and the rights of citizenship. It is an instrument of repression. It is a very small step from the stripping of rights from a legal resident holding a green card to the stripping of rights of any citizen. This is what is coming.

Khalil was ostensibly arrested under the Immigration Nationality Act of 1952, also known as the McCarran-Walter Act. It gives the Secretary of State the power to deport foreign nationals if he has "reasonable ground[s] to believe" their presence or activities in the U.S. "would have potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences." It was used to deny entry to the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, the Colombian writer Gabriel Garcia Márquez and the British author Doris Lessing.

Sen. Patrick McCarran, an open admirer of the Span-

How the USA Became Wedded to Zionist Israel

By Rick Sterling

There are many contrasts between the 35th president, John F. Kennedy, and the 45th and 47th president, Donald J. Trump. One extreme example is regarding U.S. policy toward Israel.

Unknown to many people today, JFK supported Palestinian rights and sought a sustainable peace in the region.

In 1960, when JFK was campaigning to be president, he spoke at the convention of the Zionists of America. In his speech, Kennedy was complimentary about Israel but frankly said, "I cannot believe that Israel has any real desire to remain indefinitely a garrison state surrounded by fear and hate." That warning, issued when Israel had only existed for 12 years, was ignored.

Kennedy did not just issue warnings. To the chagrin of the Israelis, JFK established friendly relations with Egypt's President Nasser. The Kennedy administration provided loans and aid to Egypt.

The JFK administration supported UN resolution 194 which called for the right of return for Palestinian refugees driven out of their homeland. Although Israel committed to abide by UN resolutions when it was admitted to the United Nations in 1949, the Israelis reneged on this commitment and were hostile to the resolution. The day before JFK was assassinated, *The New York Times* reported, "Israel Dissents as U.N. Group Backs U.S. on Arab Refugees" and "U.S. Stand Angers Israel." The second item begins, "Premier Levi Eshkol expressed extreme distaste today for the United States' position in the Palestinian-refugee debate."

John Kennedy's brother Robert was At-

torney General and headed the Department of Justice. For two years, up until the end of 1963, the DOJ made increasingly strict demands that the American Zionist Council (AZC) register as agents of a foreign country. In response, the AZC stalled, delayed, and created the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).

The most intense disagreement between Tel Aviv and Washington was regarding the nuclear site under construction at Dimona. JFK was intent on stopping the expansion of countries which possessed nuclear weapons. Although Israeli Prime Minister Ben-Gurion said the nuclear site was for peaceful purposes, JFK insisted that the U.S. needed to inspect and confirm this. The inspection deadline was December 1963.

In each of these four areas of contention, U.S. policy changed dramatically after JFK was assassinated and Lyndon



John and Jackie Kennedy, May 1961. Photo: Abbie Rowe, National Park Service

calated dramatically. Authorities have imprisoned a perfectly legal resident, Mahmoud Khalil. They have forced Columbia University to punish students without just cause and to impose obvious restrictions and prohibitions on speech and opinion. Why did they do this? It appears to follow the wishes of megadonor Miriam Adelson. She is president and chief funder of the Maccabee Task Force, which has campaigned on these issues for months.

As reported at Responsible Statecraft,

U.S. policy has been subservient to Israel's wants ever since JFK. An extreme low point was the treachery of President Johnson in covering up the Israeli attack on the USS Liberty during the June 1967 "Six Day War."

Johnson became president. Dimona was never properly inspected, and LBJ did not object to Israeli acquisition of nuclear weapons. The demand that the American Zionist Council register as an agent of a foreign country was dropped. Over time, the U.S. withdrew their support of UN resolution 194, and LBJ was hostile to Nasser and ended U.S. loans and support.

With few exceptions, U.S. policy has been subservient to Israel's wants ever since JFK. An extreme low point was the treachery of President Johnson in covering up the Israeli attack on the *USS Liberty* during the June 1967 "Six Day War." News about the Israeli killing and injuring of over 200 U.S. sailors was suppressed for decades.

Now we are at a new extreme low point. In his first presidency, Trump flouted international law and longstanding U.S. policy by moving the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The significant move was driven by mega donor Sheldon Adelson who wanted it announced on Trump's first day in office. Another prime concern of Adelson was to torpedo the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran. Trump responded as expected and withdrew the U.S. from the agreement, effectively killing it.

Now President Trump's administration is trampling on the right to free speech and aggressively suppressing critics of Israel. This repression on behalf of Israel was taking place under Biden but has es-

calated dramatically. Authorities have imprisoned a perfectly legal resident, Mahmoud Khalil. They have forced Columbia University to punish students without just cause and to impose obvious restrictions and prohibitions on speech and opinion. Why did they do this? It appears to follow the wishes of megadonor Miriam Adelson. She is president and chief funder of the Maccabee Task Force, which has campaigned on these issues for months.

As reported at Responsible Statecraft, "Adelson's support for the administration's campaign to stifle criticism of Israel on college campuses isn't a new focus but her alignment with the levers of state powers to implement her vision are unprecedented. In fact, tax documents reveal that she is directly overseeing a social media campaign targeting Khalil and Columbia University." In addition to suppressing free speech and punishing critics of Israel, the Trump administration has bombed and attacked Yemen. They are doing this despite the fact that Yemen did NOT threaten U.S. ships in the region. The Houthi government only threatened Israeli ships after Israel unilaterally broke the ceasefire and prevented food and other necessary humanitarian aid into Gaza. Israel, with U.S. support, is blatantly defying the International Court of Justice which ordered Israel to "Maintain open the Rafah crossing for unhindered provision at scale of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance" and "Immediately halt its military offensive, and any other action in the Rafah Governorate, which may inflict on the Palestinian group in Gaza conditions of life that could bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part." Israel is in violation of this order and the U.S. is complicit by providing most of the weapons.

President Trump, who campaigned and won election on the pledge to STOP needless wars, has started a new war with Yemen which is of no benefit to the U.S. but

serves the interests of Netanyahu's Israel. Will he authorize attacks on Iran, in further subservience to Bibi?

When Jewish donors to JFK's 1960 campaign suggested they should determine his Mideast policy, JFK was shocked and definitively said NO. As reported by Seymour Hersh in "The Samson Option," Kennedy talked with a friend who described what happened: "As an American citizen he (JFK) was outraged to have a Zionist group come to him and say, 'We know your campaign is in trouble. We're willing to pay your bills if you'll let us have control of your Middle East policy.'" At that time, JFK vowed to change the U.S. electoral system to prevent this corruption if he got elected. As president, he tried, but faced big hurdles and did not succeed.

Ever since JFK's death, pro-Israel forces have had undue influence on U.S. policy. If the International Court of Justice decides that Israel is committing genocide, as seems likely, the U.S. will be the primary collaborator in the war crimes. The U.S. is increasingly alone in supporting the Zionist state as it practices apartheid within Israel, theft of land in the West Bank, and massacres in Gaza. Fourteen countries now support South Africa's charges of genocide against Israel.

Under Democratic President Joe Biden, U.S. policy to Israel was unwaveringly obsequious. Despite 70% of Democratic Party voters wanting the U.S. to get a ceasefire in Gaza, the Biden/Blinken team refused to do this. The Zionist ideology combined with Zionist financial influence superseded their party members' wishes. Netanyahu ignored Biden's "red lines" with impunity.

Republican President Trump has taken this to a new level. His Zionist donors determine his Israel policy. To protect Israel, Trump issued an executive order which weaponizes antisemitism. Universities are being compelled to implement a new definition of antisemitism which conflates criticism of Israel with ethnic discrimination. Trump's campaign to "Make America Great Again" has evolved into "Miriam Adelson Gets All."

It is a remarkable descent from the days when JFK did what was best for the U.S. as well as being best for Palestinians and non-Zionist Jews.

Rick Sterling is an independent journalist based in the San Francisco Bay Area. He can be reached at rsterling1@gmail.com.

I look at the World

By Langston Hughes

I look at the world
From awakening eyes in a black face—
And this is what I see:
This fenced-off narrow space
Assigned to me.

I look then at the silly walls
Through dark eyes in a dark face—
And this is what I know:
That all these walls oppression
builds
Will have to go!

I look at my own body
With eyes no longer blind—
And I see that my own hands can
make
The world that's in my mind.
Then let us hurry, comrades,
The road to find.

Sen. Tom Cotton Tells McCarthyite Lies About Women’s Peace Group

By Col. (Ret) Ann Wright

In the March 25 U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee hearing on global threats with the five heads of intelligence agencies of the U.S. government, Sen. Tom Cotton accused on national TV a group I have worked with for over 20 years, CODEPINK: Women for Peace, of being funded by the Communist Party of China.

During the hearing, CODEPINK activist Tighe Barry stood up following Director of National Security Tulsi Gabbard’s lengthy statement about global threats to U.S. national security and yelled “Stop Funding Israel,” since neither Intelligence Committee Chair Tom Cotton nor Vice Chair Mark Warner had mentioned Israel in their opening statement, nor had Gabbard mentioned the Israeli genocide of Palestinians in Gaza in her statement.

As Capitol police were taking Barry out of the hearing room, in the horrific style of the McCarthy hearings in the 1950s, Cotton maliciously said that Barry was a “CODEPINK lunatic that was funded by the Communist party of China.” Cotton then said if

anyone had something to say to do so. Refusing to be intimidated by Cotton’s lies about the funding of CODEPINK, I stood up and yelled, “I’m a retired Army colonel and former diplomat. I work with CODEPINK and it is not funded by Communist China.” I too was hauled out of the hearing room by Capitol police and arrested. After I was taken out of the hearing room, Cotton libelously continued his McCarthy lie, “The fact that Communist China funds CODEPINK, which interrupts a hearing about Israel illustrates Director Gabbard’s point that China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea are working together in greater concert than they ever had before.”

Senator Cotton does not appreciate the responsibility he has in his one-month-old elevation to the chair of the Senate’s intelligence committee.

Senator Cotton does not seem to care that untruthful statements in a U.S. congressional hearing aired around the world can have immediate and dangerous consequences for those he lies about, their friends and family. In today’s polarized political environment we know that the words



CODEPINK member Tighe Barry at the Senate Intelligence Committee hearing.

of senior leaders can rile supporters into frenzies, as we saw on Jan. 6, 2021, when President Trump’s loyal supporters injured many Capitol police and destroyed parts of the nation’s Capitol in their attempt to stop the presidential election proceedings.

CODEPINK members have been challenging the war policies of five presidential administrations, beginning in 2001 with the Bush wars on Afghanistan and Iraq, long before Sen. Cotton was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2014. We have been in the Senate offices and halls twice as long as he has. We have nonviolently protested war policies of Bush, Obama, Trump, Biden, and now Trump again.

After getting out of the Capitol Hill police station, a CODEPINK delegation went to Sen. Cotton’s office in the Russell Senate Office building and made a compliant to this office staff.

We also submitted a complaint to the Senate Ethics Committee for the untrue and libelous statements Sen. Cotton made in the hearing.

We must push back against the abduction and deportation of international students who joined protests of U.S. complicity in the Israeli genocide of Palestinians in Gaza

and ethnic cleansing of the West Bank, the scathing treatment of visitors who have wanted to enter our country and now the McCarthyite intimidation tactics used by Sen. Cotton in a Senate intelligence committee hearing of telling lies about individuals and organizations that challenge U.S. government politics, particularly its complicity in the Israeli genocide of Gaza.

And we must call out U.S. senators who actually receive funding from front groups for other countries. Sen. Cotton has received \$1,197,989 from the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) to advocate the genocidal policies of the State of Israel.

Ann Wright served 29 years in the U.S. Army/Army Reserves and retired as a colonel. She served 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 U.S. war on Iraq. She is a member of CODEPINK, Veterans For Peace, Women Cross DMZ, and many other peace groups. She is the co-author of Dissent: Voices of Conscience.

Rashida

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fund universal healthcare, housing for all, clean drinking water, school meals, childcare, and more.

Please support the Stop Politicians Profiting from War Act, a necessary step in the push to ensure our government divests from war and death and instead invests in life—at home and abroad.

Thank you for continuing to demand better from our government. I will con-

tinue to fight like hell to rein in military spending and corporate greed, invest in working families, and work toward a future that values diplomacy and peace over the military-industrial complex. Together, we will take steps toward the long-overdue dismantling of our country’s military-industrial complex, so that we can finally put a stop to forever wars and reinvest our tax dollars into providing our communities with the resources they need and deserve.

In solidarity,
Rep. Rashida Tlaib
Michigan’s 12th Congressional District

Trying to Lead This Old-Timey Veteran

By Dave Newman	who has never been in a research study	until a security guard who is probably a vet	and I finally get my vet into the room	and says “She’s had it hard” like he knows her but he doesn’t
to the small room where I can interview him for a research study on back pain	but who I see around the hospital	walks over and says “Hey, you can’t shout that”	to start interviewing him for the research study	and I almost tear up, seeing how much he cares for her, this woman
but his legs don’t work well which is not an uncommon problem	who I notice because she is often loud	and she’s says “I’m sorry, I just get pissed”	guiding him to a chair then rolling him to a table	who wanted to belittle the world and that’s the kind of compassion
for guys who served in the Army when they were teenagers	this woman who was maybe in a war I missed	and instead of arresting her or berating her for the insults	then leaning his cane nearby so he feels safe	I’ve been striving for, working for and failing at for my whole
or in their early 20s guys whose only options	and there are a lot of little wars you realized you’ve missed	he plops down in the chair next to her in the waiting room	and while I pull out the forms and a pen and couple pieces	fucking life.
were factory or minimum wage or living with their parents forever	once you start working with the folks who fought	like it’s a recliner and says “No, I get it”	of butterscotch hard candy I offer to all the research	—from Rattle #86, Winter 2024 Readers’ Choice Award Winner
and this woman who was in the Air Force	and she sits in the waiting room and shouts at random vets	and they start chatting just like she hadn’t cunt-bashed	participants because they’re old and their throats get dry	
	her peers, saying “The cunts have arrived without notice”	the entire room at a volume that distorted her face	he reaches across the table and touches my hand	

Change the Conversation from Doomsday to Peace Day

By Alice Slater

The *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, with the advice of Albert Einstein and scientists from the Manhattan Project who developed the atomic bomb, established the Doomsday Clock in 1947 to illustrate the annihilating danger the earth has faced since the creation of the diabolical nuclear bomb. At that time, the clock was set at 7 minutes to midnight, their estimate of how much time we had left before nuclear war would wreak catastrophic devastation on our planet and all living things in existence.

Over the years, the hands of the clock have been reset, forward and backward, as scientists and policy makers estimated how immediate the nuclear danger loomed, based on the perils posed by other countries obtaining nuclear weapons, as well as new arms control measures, weapons limitations, and agreements, particularly between the U.S. and Russia for disarmament measures. At its most optimistic, the Doomsday hands were moved to 17 minutes to midnight in 1991 when the U.S. and USSR announced the complete cessation of nuclear testing.

Shockingly, despite years of nuclear arms control measures, resulting in arsenals down from a high of 70,000 bombs at the peak of the world's nuclear insanity to about 12,000 today, 11,000 of which are in the U.S. and Russia with nearly 4,000 poised and ready to go, with another 1000 held by the six other nuclear weapons states—UK, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea—the clock has never been set closer to Doomsday than it is today—at 90 seconds to midnight!

It's time to transform the clock and change the conversation. Dire warnings about Doomsday have done little to increase our world's safety these 77 years. It's time to speak about the many possibilities and missed opportunities to create the new dawning of a Peace Day, changing the clock of doom to a clock that can tick off the many solutions that have been ignored and disregarded. We must stop giving our blessing and consent to endless steps to "control" arms that lead to ever more danger, as illustrated by the aging Doomsday clock.

Instead, we must demand their abolition, as we move to a nuclear free world at peace unthreatened by catastrophic annihilation. Indeed, scholars writing of the sad story of endless negotiations to control arms but never to abolish them have even coined a new term for the meaningless steps to nowhere—anti-preneurism—where instead of the U.S. proposing abolition, or total and complete disarmament, or elimination of weapons, it is always proposing new meaningless steps towards illusory progress!

To begin a new conversation for abolition, we must acknowledge the missed opportunities and broken promises since the dawn of the nuclear age. At the very beginning, in 1945, Stalin asked Truman to put the nuclear bomb under international control at the newly established United Nations. The U.S. rejected Russia's proposal and Russia got the bomb!

When the wall came down in Germany and Gorbachev dissolved the Warsaw Pact and freed all of occupied Eastern Europe, he proposed to Reagan that the U.S. and Russia eliminate all our nuclear weapons, provided the U.S. would end its "Star Wars" program to dominate and control the military use of space. Reagan turned him down and Gorbachev withdrew Russia's offer.

Gorbachev, anxious about the fate of East Germany, urged Reagan not to take a united Germany into NATO. The Russians lost 27 million people to the Nazi onslaught



of WWII. The U.S. assured him that NATO would not expand "one inch to the east."

Despite repeated requests to the U.S. from Russian President Putin to honor those U.S. promises made to Gorbachev and again to Yeltsin, the U.S., driven by visions of Empire steadily expanded Nato eastward. It began with Clinton's expansion of NATO to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in 1999, followed by Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia in 2004, and Albania, Croatia, Montenegro and North Macedonia between 2009 and 2017. And during the war in Ukraine, Sweden and Finland joined NATO.

The U.S. stations nuclear weapons in 5 states: Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Belgium and Turkey. Russia, during the Ukraine war, put nuclear weapons in Belarus.

Clinton led NATO in the bombing of Kosovo in 1999, bypassing Russia's veto in the Security Council, violating the UN treaty we signed never to commit a war of aggression against another nation unless under imminent threat of attack;

Clinton refused Putin's offer to each cut our massive nuclear arsenals to 1000 bombs each and call all the others to the table to negotiate for their elimination, provided we stopped developing missile sites in Romania;

Bush walked out of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002 and Obama put the new missile base in Romania while Trump built another in Poland;

Obama pledged over one trillion dollars for the next 30 years for two new nuclear bomb factories, missiles, submarines, airplanes and warheads which was upped even more by Trump and Biden.

Despite repeated requests from Russia and China to negotiate treaties to ban weapons in space and cyberwar in UN resolutions and negotiating forums, the U.S. refuses to cooperate.

We are at a turning point in history. It is time to change the conversation with bold new proposals. Proposals that are guaranteed to bring us a respite from the growing terror. Proposals that will bring a shift in planetary consciousness allowing us to respond cooperatively to the impending cataclysmic climate disaster down the road. Proposals that will usher in a rising dawn and change the Doomsday Clock to a new Peace Day clock. Mother Earth grows impatient with the folly of humankind.

Here are a series of steps that are most likely to lead to peace on earth if the U.S. is ready to mobilize against what has been described as the MICIMATT (Military, Industrial, Congressional, Intelligence, Media, Academic Think Tank complex) and work for peace.

- Take up repeated Russian and Chinese proposals for treaties to ban weapons in space and cyberwar
- Reinstatement of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia and remove U.S. missiles from Romania and Poland
- Remove U.S. nuclear weapons from five NATO

states in a deal for Russia removing its recently placed nuclear weapons in Belarus

- Take all nuclear weapons off high alert and separate the warheads from their delivery systems as China does—the wisdom of the East
- Dismantle NATO and respect and honor the United Nations

There's little doubt that Russia and China would be willing partners in these initiatives. They have been proposing them to the United States and voting on them in the U.N. for more than 10 years.

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Alice Slater serves on the boards of World BEYOND War and the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space and is an NGO representative to the United Nations for the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. She is a member of the Veterans For Peace Nuclear Abolition Working Group and helped draft the Veterans For Peace Nuclear Posture Review.

Making Peace

By Denise Levertov

A voice from the dark called out,
'The poets must give us
imagination of peace, to oust the intense, familiar
imagination of disaster. Peace, not only
the absence of war.'

But peace, like a poem,
is not there ahead of itself,
can't be imagined before it is made,
can't be known except
in the words of its making,
grammar of justice,
syntax of mutual aid.

A feeling towards it,
dimly sensing a rhythm, is all we have
until we begin to utter its metaphors,
learning them as we speak.

A line of peace might appear
if we restructured the sentence our lives are
making,
revoked its reaffirmation of profit and power,
questioned our needs, allowed
long pauses ...

A cadence of peace might balance its weight
on that different fulcrum; peace, a presence,
an energy field more intense than war,
might pulse then,
stanza by stanza into the world,
each act of living
one of its words, each word
a vibration of light—facets
of the forming crystal.