



VETERANS FOR PEACE  
HUMBOLDT BAY  
CHAPTER 56

# THE FOGHORN

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*“Cutting Through the Fog of War”*

*It is probably time for members of VFP56 to go back and look at some of the goals and objectives we pledged when we joined the chapter. Too often as members, we get complacent and forget what we are all about and who and what we really stand for. There is no place in our organization for anything but peaceful dialogue on issues some members may disagree upon. We can always show respect in the worst case scenarios.*

## VETERANS FOR PEACE

### “PLEDGE OF NONVIOLENCE”

- \*We will use our anger at injustice as a positive nonviolent force for change.
- \*We will not vandalize
- \*We will not use or carry illegal drugs.
- We will refrain from insults and swearing.
- \*We will not run or otherwise make threatening motions.
- \*We will not assault, either verbally or physically those who oppose or disagree with , even if they assaulted us.
- \*We will protect those who oppose us from insult or attack.
- \*Our attitude as conveyed through words, symbols and actions will be one of openness, friendliness and respect towards all people we encounter, including police officers, military personnel, members of the larger community, and all marchers.
- \*We will carry no weapons.
- \*As members of a nonviolent demonstration, we will follow the directions of the designated coordinators.
- \*In the event of a serious disagreement, we will remove ourselves from the action.

*(e) To abolish war as an instrument of national policy. To achieve these goals, members of Veterans For Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interest for the larger purpose of world peace.*

*There is a revolution coming. It will not be like revolutions of the past. It will originate with the individuals and with culture, and it will change the political structure only as its final act. It will not require violence to succeed, and it cannot be successfully resisted by violence.*

*Charles A. Reich “The Greeing of America”*



## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

*We having dutifully served our nation, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work, with others:*

- (a) To increase public awareness of the costs of wars*
- (b) To restrain our government from intervening overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations*
- (c) To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons*
- (d) To seek justice for veterans and victims of war.*



## The Stench of American Hypocrisy

*By Paul Craig Roberts*

November 15, 2010 "Information Clearing House" -- Ten years of rule by the Bush and Obama regimes have seen the collapse of the rule of law in the United States. Is the American media covering this ominous and extraordinary story? No the American media is preoccupied with the rule of law in Burma (Myanmar).

The military regime that rules Burma just released from house arrest the pro-democracy leader, Aung San Suu Kyi. The American media used the occasion of her release to get on Burma's case for the absence of the rule of law. I'm all for the brave lady, but if truth be known, "freedom and democracy" America needs her far worse than does Burma.

I'm not an expert on Burma, but the way I see it the objection to a military government is that the government is not accountable to law. Instead, such a regime behaves as it sees fit and issues edicts that advance its agenda. Burma's government can be criticized for not having a rule of law, but it cannot be criticized for ignoring its own laws. We might not like what the Burmese government does, but, precisely speaking, it is not behaving illegally.

In contrast, the United States government claims to be a government of laws, not of men, but when the executive branch violates the laws that constrain it, those responsible are not held accountable for their criminal actions. As accountability is the essence of the rule of law, the absence of accountability means the absence of the rule of law.

The list of criminal actions by presidents Bush and Obama, Vice President Cheney, the CIA, the NSA, the US military, and other branches of the government is long and growing. For example, both president Bush and vice president Cheney violated US and international laws against torture. Amnesty International and the American Civil Liberties Union responded to Bush's recent admission that he authorized torture with calls for a criminal investigation of Bush's crime.

In a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder, the ACLU reminded the US Department of Justice (sic) that "a nation committed to the rule of law cannot simply ignore evidence that its most senior leaders authorized torture."

Rob Freer of Amnesty International said that Bush's admission "to authorizing acts which constitute torture under international law" and which constitute "a crime under international law," puts the US government "under obligation to investigate and to bring those responsible to justice."

The ACLU and Amnesty International do not want to admit it, but the US government shed its commitment to the rule of law a decade ago when the US launched its naked aggression--war crimes under the Nuremberg standard--against Afghanistan and Iraq on the basis of lies and deception.

The US government's contempt for the rule of law took another step when President Bush violated the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and had the National Security Agency bypass the FISA court and spy on Americans without warrants. The New York Times is on its high horse about the rule of law in Burma, but when a patriot revealed to the Times that Bush was violating US law, the Times' editors sat on the leak for one year until after Bush was safely re-elected.

Holder, of course, will not attempt to hold Bush accountable for the crime of torture. Indeed, Assistant US Attorney John Durham has just cleared the CIA of accountability for its crime of destroying the videotape evidence of the US government's illegal torture of detainees, a felony under US law.

Last February Cheney said on ABC's This Week that "I was a big supporter of waterboarding." US law has always regarded waterboarding as torture. The US government executed WW II Japanese for waterboarding American POWs. But Cheney has escaped accountability, which means that there is no rule of law.

Vice president Cheney's office also presided over the outing of a covert CIA agent, a felony. Yet, nothing happened to Cheney, and the underling who took the fall had his sentence commuted by president Bush.

President Obama has made himself complicit in the crimes of his predecessor by refusing to enforce the rule of law. In his criminality, Obama has actually surpassed Bush. Bush is the president of extra-judicial torture, extra-judicial detention, extra-judicial spying and invasions of privacy, but Obama has one-upped Bush. Obama is the president of extra-judicial murder.

Not only is Obama violating the sovereignty of an Ameri-

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can ally, Pakistan, by sending in drones and special forces teams to murder Pakistani civilians, but in addition Obama has a list of American citizens whom he intends to murder without arrest, presentation of evidence, trial and conviction.

The most massive change brought by Obama is his assertion of the right of the executive branch to murder whomever it wishes without any interference from US and international law. The world has not seen such a criminal government as Obama's since Joseph Stalin's and Hitler's.

On November 8, the US Department of Justice (sic) told federal district court judge John Bates that president Obama's decision to murder American citizens is one of "the very core powers of the president." Moreover, declared the Justice (sic) Department, the murder of American citizens is a "political question" that is not subject to judicial review.

In other words, federal courts exist for one purpose only--to give a faux approval to executive branch actions.

If truth be known, there is more justice in Burma under the military regime than in the USA. The military regime put Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest in her own home.

The military regime did not throw her into a dungeon and rape and torture her under cover of false allegations and indefinite detention without charges. Moreover, the military "tyrants" released her either as a sign of good will or under pressure from international human rights groups, or some combination of the two.

If only comparable good will existed in the US government or pressure from international human rights groups had equal force in America as in Burma.

But, alas, in America macho tough guys approve the virtual strip search of their wives and daughters by full body scanners and the grouping by TSA thugs of three-year old children screaming in terror.

Unlike in Burma, where Aung San Suu Kyi fights for human rights, the sheeple in Amerika submit to the total invasion of their privacy and to the total destruction of their civil liberties for no other reason than they are brain dead and believe without any evidence that they are at the mercy of "terrorists" in far distant lands who have no armies, navies, or air forces and are armed only with AK-47s and improvised explosive devices.

The ignorant population of the "Great American Superpower," buried in fear propagated by a Ministry of Truth, has ac-

quiesced in the total destruction of the US Constitution and their civil liberties.

Sheeple such as these have no respect anywhere on the face of the earth.

Paul Craig Roberts was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in the Reagan administration. He is coauthor of *The Tyranny of Good Intentions*

*Submitted by Rich Gilchrist*

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## DVD WAR TORN

THE DVD "WAR TORN" WILL BE SHOWN AT THE MARSH COMMONS THIS COMING WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1ST. MARSH COMMONS IS LOCATED AT 101 H STREET, ARCATA.

WE WILL HAVE A SMALL POTLUCK BEGINNING AT 5:30 WITH PLANS TO START THE DVD ABOUT 6:30.

ALL VFP MEMBERS AND THEIR FRIENDS ARE INVITED TO COME. BRING A DISH AND SHARE THE COMPANY OF GOOD FRIENDS.

Next VFP56 meeting will be held on Thursday, December 2nd at 7:00 PM. Meeting will be held in the Commons Room at 550 Union Street in Arcata.



## Veteran Matthis Chiroux Speaks Out Against the U.S. Military

<http://www.tuftsdaily.com/features/veteran-matthis-chiroux-speaks-out-against-the-u-s-military-1.2407531>

November 16, 2010

Every Nov. 11, American veterans are honored in a variety of ways. While 43 percent of Americans think our current military involvement in Afghanistan is a “mistake,” 76 percent of Americans have a great deal of confidence in the military as an institution, according to a Gallup poll from August. Matthis Chiroux, a veteran who spent five years in the service and received an honorable discharge in 2007, thinks that this confidence is dangerous.

“The cultural glorification we do of the soldier archetype is so over the top and you feel that when you’re in the military,” he told the Daily. “You are expected to be a killer, to be a physical manifestation of American might, to say ‘I am the coolest thing since Jesus Christ. I got this f gun, and I work out, and I yell at people, and people are scared of me and that’s what it is to be a man.’ That’s not the way the world works.”

Chiroux made his way onto the national stage in 2008, when he refused to be deployed to Iraq for a second tour with the army, speaking directly to Congress.

“I wasn’t going to go to Canada didn’t want to uproot everything and just disappear,” he said. “If the army was going to ruin my life, I wanted to make sure they knew it.”

Chiroux is one of the many soldiers who have returned from war and decided to enroll in college he is currently in his third year at Brooklyn College. “[Going to university after being in the service] carries a whole lot of weight in the soldier’s imagination,” he said. “So many young men and women join the military thinking it will be their path to college. From day one, I was fantasizing about what college was going to be like I could just survive five years of this s and then I get to go to college, which is going to be where I become a person, finally. I thought of it as when I would finally be free. Ultimately, it was a very different experience than I expected one that’s been very difficult at times.”

The National Survey of Student Engagement recently reported that although veterans study as much as other students,

they have an incredibly difficult time adjusting to college life, and many of them feel that their schools do not offer them support services through which to become better acclimated and connected to life on campus.

“You can just see there are all kinds of walls built between the veteran student and his or her peers,” Chiroux said. “One of the biggest hurdles is simply getting out of the military, which is a very difficult thing to do, especially if while in, you sustain some kind of trauma, which I believe is everyone in the military. Another hurdle to overcome is finding a place for yourself, which is not just adjusting to what it’s like not being in the army, but actually finding a place in society. Oftentimes there doesn’t really seem to be one; it’s on a pedestal or in a parade.”

Chiroux enlisted in the army soon after he graduated from high school, but not because he wanted to: He got into trouble with the police and was given the choice between being prosecuted as an adult in federal court or enlisting.

“I always say, I’m living proof that we do not have an all volunteer army,” he said.

After his five years in the army, during which he served as an army strategic communicator and journalist, touring in Japan, Germany, Afghanistan and the Philippines, Chiroux returned to the United States in 2007. He got an apartment in Brooklyn with the one person he knew in New York, a fellow veteran. The two engaged mostly in reckless behavior after returning to civilian life, Chiroux said.

“I was drinking excessively and being very physically impulsive,” he said. “One Sunday morning, I’d been up all night with a couple of women I was hanging out with it was around 9 a.m. and somehow we managed to get up on top of a skyscraper right next to Ground Zero. I was wasted and I remember standing on the edge of that building and looking down at the ground and seeing the wall stretch down from the tips of my toes to the sidewalk, 68 stories and the wind blowing. I went off like a rocket and it took me a while until I finally realized I may be having a good time, but there’s something wrong with me.”

Such self awareness is difficult for many veterans to manage, Chiroux said, particularly if they’re dealing with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as a reported 319,000 veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are. Chiroux’s New York apartment mate is one of them.

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“She was very deep into cocaine and she couldn’t come down,” he said. “It was like she was trying to relive the rush of combat.”

Substance abuse is one of the most common consequences of PTSD, Chiroux said, and the most common way he has seen veterans self medicate is with excessive amounts of alcohol and cocaine.

PTSD has afflicted soldiers for generations, but the number of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with the disorder has been alarmingly high. The rising number has been attributed by some to an increase in the amount of time that modern day soldiers spend at war. The length of soldiers’ tours in Iraq can sometimes be as long as 15 months and nearly half of the 525,000 active duty soldiers have been deployed for more than one tour.

While Chiroux had served for a year on the board of Iraq Veterans Against the War, he has since parted ways with the organization after receiving a lot of backlash from military communities for last March burning an American flag in Lafayette Park at an anti war rally.

“I came up in front of the crowd with an American flag handkerchief and I told them I thought this represented freedom and justice and love, and now that I’ve been in the military and seen what this flag covers up, I don’t believe that anymore,” he said. “I was a slave to this flag, a form of slavery particular to veterans. And I burned the flag in front of this crowd. When you see a veteran, who is supposed to lead the way to prostrating ourselves in front of this sort of empire, burning a flag ... it’s different than seeing a college student burn a flag.”

“They buried my friends under the flag and that’s why I burned it. That flag killed my friends; soldiers had that flag on their arm when torturing people at Abu Ghraib,” he continued. “The military, they get to give you a symbol, tell you what it means and send you off to die with it. They’re going to wrap your story in that and burn the truth beneath it why wouldn’t I burn it?”

*Submitted by Rich Gilchrist*

## LaVena Johnson The Silent Truth Documentary

Is there an army cover up of the rape and murder of women soldiers?

Ninety-four United States military women have died in Iraq or during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Of these deaths some twenty occurred under extremely suspicious circumstances; defined by the Army and the Department of Defense as ‘non-combat related injuries,’ with the additional characterization of ‘suicide’.

‘The Silent Truth’, tells the story of nineteen year-old U. S. Army Private LaVena Johnson, who was found dead on the military base in Balad, Iraq in July, 2005, her death determined by the US Army to be suicide by a self-inflicted M-16 gun shot. Through interviews with Ms. Johnson’s parents, Dr. John and Linda Johnson, this documentary tells the story of the family’s struggle to find the truth surrounding LaVena’s death, and their continued pursuit of justice for their daughter. As Dr. Johnson explains it — from the day his daughter’s body was returned to him, he had grave suspicions about the Army’s characterization of her death as suicide.

He says that while viewing his daughter’s body at the funeral home, he developed concerns about the bruising on her face. He was also puzzled by the discrepancy in the autopsy report regarding the location of the gunshot wound. Dr. Johnson, a U. S. Army veteran and a twenty-five year U. S. Army civilian employee who had counseled veterans, was mystified about how the exit wound of an M-16 shot could be so small. The hole in LaVena’s head appeared to be more the size of a pistol shot rather than an M-16 round. He questioned why the exit hole was on the left side of her head, when she was right handed. But the fact that military uniform white gloves were glued onto LaVena’s hands, hiding third degree burns, is what deepened Dr. Johnson’s suspicion that the Army’s investigation into the death of his daughter was flawed.

As the documentary will show, over the next two and one-

*...continued on page 7*



I encourage you to consider joining other VFP members in DC on December 16. It is time to make a unified statement against the war. See the attached fliers for more information. Feel free to use the fliers to promote the event locally or create your own flier.

Our unified voices need to be heard.

Be about Peace.  
Dennis

# Not Another Day! Not Another Dollar! Not Another Life! Peace on Earth?

Mr. Obama: End These Wars!  
Not tomorrow. Not next year. Now!  
StopTheseWars.org StopThese  
Wars@gmail.com

Endorsed by: Veterans For Peace, ANSWER  
Coalition,  
CODEPINK, Fellowship of Reconciliation,  
March Forward!, Peace of the Action, United National Antiwar Committee,  
Voices for Creative Nonviolence,  
War Resisters League, Women's International  
League for Peace and Freedom, World Can't Wait

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half years, Dr. and Mrs. Johnson and their family and friends, through the Freedom of Information Act and Congressional offices, relentlessly requested that the Department of the Army supply them with all documents concerning LaVena's death. With each response of the Army to their demands, another piece of information/evidence about LaVena's death emerged.

Most shocking, was a CD Dr. Johnson received of photographs taken by Army investigators of his daughter's body as it lay where it had been found, as well as other photographs of her disrobed body taken just prior to the autopsy.

These photographs reveal that LaVena, a small woman, barely 5 feet tall and weighing less than 100 pounds, had been brutally beaten. The photographs of her disrobed body showed bruises, scratch marks and teeth imprints on the upper part of her torso. The right side of her back as well as her right hand had been burned and there was clear evidence of sexual assault.

As the Johnsons explain in our interviews, despite the bruises, scratches, teeth imprints and burns on her body, Lavena was found completely dressed in a burning contractor's tent. There was a blood trail outside the tent. She apparently had been dressed after the attack and her body moved into the tent and set it on fire.

On April 9, 2008, Dr. John Johnson and his wife, Linda, flew from their home in St. Louis for meetings with U.S. Congress members and their staffs, requesting that the Army reopen LaVena's case. There they met with Representative Clay from Missouri, his staff, and representatives from the Army's investigative unit. The Army maintained its position throughout the dialogue and had no answers for the Johnsons when contradictions in the evidence were pointed out. They steadfastly insisted that LaVena had shot herself.

Today the Johnsons are continuing the fight to have their daughter's case reopened by the Army and are still requesting a congressional hearing into the obvious cover-up. As filmmakers we are following this renewed effort, and have initiated our own meetings with Congressional members of both the Armed Services Committee and the Oversight Committee.

Interviews with our Military Consultant, (Ret.) Colonel Ann Wright will also be included in the film. Colonel Wright will provide an overview of sexual abuse of women troops in the military, its alarming increase, and describe several other suspicious 'suicides', that have yet to be resolved.

*Dr. John and Mrs. Linda Johnson have created a scholarship fund to honor their daughter. Donations can be made to:  
The LaVena L. Johnson College Scholarship Fund  
P.O. Box 117,  
Florissant, MO 63032*

## VETERANS SAY, "TAKE A STAND FOR PEACE"

*By Dennis Lane*

During the Vietnam War, Martin Luther King called our government "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today." True then—and even more so today.

A few years before that, in 1964 Mario Savio made his great speech at Berkeley; at the end he says, "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!"

There are children being orphaned, maimed or killed every day, in our name, with our tax dollars; there are soldiers and civilians dying or being maimed for life, in order to generate profits for the most odious imperialistic corporate war machine ever, again in our name. How long are we going to let this go on? Until it is too late, until this destructive machine destroys all of us and the planet to boot?

We believe that the power of courageous, committed people is greater than that of corporate warmongers. But we will only see our power when we use it collectively, when we stand together.

With courage, persistence, boldness and numbers, we can eventually make this monstrous war machine grind to a halt, so that our children and all children everywhere can grow up in a peaceful world.

**Join us at the White House  
on December 16th!**





Veterans For Peace  
Chapter 56

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# LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

If you would like to submit an article, opinion, comment or response to anything you have read which might interest the members of VFP-56, please e-mail it to [turtldnccer@aol.com](mailto:turtldnccer@aol.com), in word format, or mail to Jim Sorter at 1762 Buttermilk Lane, Arcata, CA 95521. Submissions will be included on a first come basis until the newsletter is full. Late arriving submissions will be archived for future issues.

## VFP56 LOOKING FOR NEW SECRETARY & COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEMBER

Due to the recent resignation of the long time VFP56 secretary and coordinating committee member Jim, VFP56 is now looking for his replacement. Jim will still be working monthly on the publishing of the *Foghorn*.

Anyone who would like to be considered for one or both of these positions is welcome to submit his/her name at the December 2nd general meeting. All names will be welcomed for consideration.

Thanks for your interest. With your support VFP56 will only grow stronger.

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