



VETERANS FOR PEACE
HUMBOLDT BAY
CHAPTER 56

THE FOGHORN

DECEMBER
2015

“Cutting Through the Fog of War”



Welcome Home!
Golden Rule

**Crew & Slide Show
Maiden Voyage Report**

You Are Invited!

Welcome Home Party ⚓ Lasagna Dinner ⚓ Fundraiser

Sunday, December 6, 2015, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Redwood Coast Montessori School ⚓ 1611 Peninsula Drive, Manila, CA

Cost: \$25.00 per person ⚓ Children under 12, \$10.00 ⚓ Wine & Beer: Cash Bar

Entertainment: The band Kingfoot

Please R.S.V.P. by December 1st, call 707-443-5180

If you cannot attend please consider sending a tax deductible donation.



Veterans For Peace Golden Rule Project
Post Office Box 87
Samoa, California 95564-0087

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
FOR SET-UP & BREAKDOWN**
Meal cost waived for volunteers.
Call 707-443-5180 if you can help.



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To All:.....

As I reported in August, The Rule made it to San Diego. It has returned to Humboldt Bay and is now tied up at the City Marina. Two and a half months total, over fifteen hundred miles, with about three hundred and seventy hours on the engine. Captains and crew changed as we entered and left geographical areas. The voyage saw three captains and seven crewmen come and go. The Captains were David Robson from Baltimore, Ron Cole of San Diego and Ed Fracker of the Humboldt Bay Yacht Association, all are very experienced trans oceanic sailors. The crew started out with Jan Passion, who could very well be a future captain and Mike Gonzalez with Helen Jaccard. Skip Oliver the famous Great Lakes sailor and Historian joined the crew along with Machi St Rain, Allen McAsee and David Sangiovanni. There were no major problems on the voyage although I've been given a long list of things that need to be finished and or changed which will take several months of work to accomplish. The next trip will be North in late spring, end of April, first of May, several ports are already being scheduled.

Our biggest problem to date is as usual, money. Once our due bills are satisfied we will be essentially broke and we still have a few big ticket items to purchase. We must replace the off shore life raft and two immersion suits and while we're at it I'd like to install an Auto Helm to help steer at night. Helen Jaccard is working on a budget for when the boat is under way including the costs of a ground crew. She is using information from the log book and personal notes she took while at sea. Helen is also developing a news letter to be sent out to a long list of names she's collected during the voyage. Mike is already working on the to do list as am I. Ed Fraker has designed and is collecting materials for a three pronged spreader for the Mizzen mast that will hopefully solve a pumping problem experienced during the voyage. He is also designing a type of drop down sail bag that will be very helpful when lowering the sails. The way it is now requires three or four people to fold and secure the sails, with the new system only two people would be needed.

We're getting the shop at the boat yard back in shape so we can work comfortably during the winter. Help is always appreciated just come by the yard around lunch and there should be someone there.

Respectfully submitted by Chuck DeWitt, Restoration Coordinator, Golden Rule Project, November 2015

Don't Put Killers on Cereal Boxes

By David Swanson

Online petition campaigns were launched in October to stop Wal-Mart from selling Israeli soldier Halloween costumes and to get Wheaties cereal to start putting U.S. soldiers on its cereal boxes -- boxes known for featuring photos of outstanding athletes.

The two campaigns have no relation to each other. Wheaties has not, to my knowledge, indicated the slightest interest in doing what the petition asks it to do.

I'd like Wal-Mart and every other store to stop selling all (not just Israeli) military and every other sort of armed, killer costume, including science-

fiction futuristic Star Wars and any other. Sure, it's a particular problem that the U.S. government gives Israel billions of dollars in free weapons every year with which to attack civilians, and that presidential candidates in the United States behave as if they're campaigning to represent Israel. But if you oppose celebrating murder, including organized state-sanctioned uniformed murder, then you oppose everything that normalizes and encourages it.

So, of course, I also oppose glorifying "our troops" on cereal boxes. For one thing, it conflates the idea of an athlete with the idea of a soldier (which I use here as shorthand for sailor, Marine, airman, drone pilot, mercenary, special force, etc., etc.). An athlete doesn't kill anyone, maim anyone, turn anyone's house to rubble, traumatize any children, overthrow anyone's government, throw any regions of the world into chaos, produce radical violent groups that hate my country, drain the public treasury of \$1,000,000,000,000 a year, justify the stripping away of civil liberties in the name of wars for freedom, devastate the natural environment, drop napalm or white phosphorus, use DU, imprison people without charge, torture, or send missiles into weddings and hospitals killing one vaguely-identified victim for every 10 people murdered. An athlete plays sports.

Note that I'm also not proposing that we put troops on cereal boxes with devil horns inked onto their heads, blaming them for the faults of the whole society into which they were born. Sure, I blame them. Sure, I'd rather celebrate conscientious objectors. But there is an almost universal delusion in our culture which holds that when you blame someone for something, you exonerate everyone else. So, although it makes not the slightest sense, people interpret blaming a soldier for participating in a war as un-blaming the presidents, Congress members, propagandists, profiteers, and everyone else who helped make that war happen. In reality, blame is a limitless quantity, and everyone gets some, including me. But in the fantasyland we live in, you can't go around blaming anyone for something done by many people, unless you are allowed a paragraph of explanation. And, besides, I'd start with all the presidents, Congress members, etc., as war criminals before reaching any rank-and-file in the list of candidates for cereal box condemnation.

Also, "our troops," are simply not our troops, not collectively. Many of us vote against, petition against, demonstrate against, write against, and organize against the use and the expansion and the existence of the military. One wishes it were needless to say, but this does not suggest some sort of hatred for the individuals who are soldiers, the majority of whom say that economic option limitations was one big factor in their joining up, and many of whom believe what they are told about doing good for the places they invade. Nor of course does opposition to militarism imply some sort of twisted support for the militarism of some other nation or group. Imagine disliking soccer and consequently being denounced for supporting some other soccer team. Opposing war is the same way -- it actually means opposing war, not routing for the "team" opposed by someone else.

"Team" is a horrible metaphor for a military. The military can involve lots of teamwork, but it has been a century now since a war involved two teams competing on a battlefield. In World War II and ever since, wars have been fought in people's towns, and the majority of the victims have been civilians not signed up on any team. When groups like Veterans For Peace speak out against further participation in war, on the grounds that war is the unjustifiable, counter-productive slaughter of men, women, and children, they do so out of love for soldiers and potential future soldiers. Of course, many other veterans do not share that belief, or do not voice it aloud or publicly if they do. Perhaps not unrelated is the fact that the lead-



ing cause of death of U.S. soldiers sent into recent and current wars is suicide. What more profound statement that something is amiss could be made than that? What could I possibly say to even approach it?

Here's the text of the petition in favor of putting troops on cereal boxes:

"The Wheaties Box is an iconic image in America. It celebrates our best, our brightest, and those achieving high honors on the athletic field. Isn't it time to honor another set of American heroes? Our troops who served their country and gave their all, deserve the same honor as our great athletes."

In fact our brightest and most creative intellects are not honored at all on Wheaties. Neither are our firemen and women, our emergency crews, our environmentalists, our teachers, our children, our poets, our diplomats, our farmers, our artists, our actors and actresses. No. It's just athletes. If you think troops deserve an honor, clearly it is not, in fact, the same as athletes. And what of those of us who agree with President Kennedy ("War will exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that the warrior does today") -- Should we get our heroes on cereal boxes, too?

"Imagine the national pride of seeing a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor on the Wheaties box. General Mills, proud maker of Wheaties, can make this a new tradition. Next to the sacrifice these heroes and their families have made, it's a small honor. But in our celebrity-obsessed culture, it can be a new tradition we all can be proud to share."

It's just not true that we would all be proud. Some of us would deem it fascistic. Of course, we could just choose not to buy that cereal, while Anderson Cooper and anyone else who despises conscientious objectors could just not buy any cereal box honoring that tradition. But this petition is not proposing to force Wheaties to honor soldiers, just recommending it. Well, I'm just recommending against it.

"General Mills, we are asking you to please add servicemembers [sic] who have been honored for their distinct service and heroism, to your rotation of those recognized on the Wheaties Box. We don't do enough to honor those who served, especially those people who gave the ultimate sacrifice on the battlefield. And while an image on a box of cereal may not seem like much, it's a gesture that says so much about what we value. It's the type of gesture we need to see happen more often. We hope General Mills will show us that these men and women are worth recognizing on their iconic brand. Please sign and share the petition telling General Mills to place our honored heroes from the military on their Wheaties box."

The U.S. military spends a fortune in public tax dollars advertising itself on race cars and in ceremonies at football games, and so on. Were Wheaties to pick up on this idea and profit from it by making the military pay, that would be bad enough. Doing it for free would be worse. But I don't think the military would pay for it. The military advertises the generic faceless troop, not an actual specific soldier. Many veterans are essentially abandoned by the military, denied healthcare, left homeless, and -- again -- in many cases doomed to suicide.

During the war on Vietnam, recipients of medals of honor, angrily threw them back, rejecting what they had been part of. Any actual specific war hero could do that. And then where would Wheaties be?

Once in recent years the military tried to honor a particular flesh-and-blood soldier, and at the same time to merge its image with that of athletes. The soldier's name was Pat Tillman. He had been a football star and had famously given up a multi-million dollar football contract in order to join the military and do his patriotic duty to protect the country from evil terrorists. He was the most famous actual troop in the U.S. military, and television pundit Ann Coulter called him "an American original -- virtuous, pure, and masculine like only an American male can be."

Except that he came to no longer believe the stories that had led him to enlist, and Ann Coulter stopped praising him. On September 25, 2005, the San Francisco Chronicle reported that Tillman had become critical of the Iraq war and had scheduled a meeting with the prominent war critic Noam Chomsky to take place when he returned from Afghanistan, all information that Tillman's mother and Chomsky later confirmed. Tillman couldn't confirm it because he had died in Afghanistan in 2004 from three bullets to the forehead at short range, bullets shot by an American.

The White House and the military knew Tillman had died from so-called friendly fire, but they falsely told the media he'd died in a hostile exchange. Senior Army commanders knew the facts and yet approved awarding Tillman a Silver Star, a Purple Heart, and a posthumous promotion, all based on his having died fighting the enemy. They would no doubt have also approved his photo for a Wheaties box.

And then where would the Wheaties thank-a-warrior campaign have been when the truth about Tillman's death and the truth about Tillman's views came out? I say: Wheaties, do not risk it. The Pentagon has not risked it since Tillman. Its generals (McChrystal, Petraeus) inevitably attract the spotlights and inevitably disgrace themselves. No rank-and-file troops are put forward as "icons." They're just used to justify massive spending "for the troops" that goes to weapons profiteers and not to one single troop.

The thought of blood just doesn't go with breakfast cereal, Wheaties, and even the thought that this proposal came from somewhere in this country is enough to make me slightly nauseated.

Next VFP56 meeting will be held
on Thursday, December 3rd at
7:00 PM.
Meeting will be held at 24 Uni-
tarian Fellowship Way, Bayside,
Jacoby Creek Road. Veterans and
non-veterans are more than wel-
come to come and help us dialogue
about what we together can do to
bring about peace in this complex
world.



WHAT WILL COME AFTER PARIS

Letter to the Editor

By John Schaefer

France has reacted with anger to the Paris attacks, just as we did after 9/11. But history shown not only that a thoughtless response doesn't win the peace but bombing makes it worse by generating more angry fighters. It's impossible to defend against suicide attacks.

We should have learned by now, and it's time to try something different.

For starters, we can understand those who would attack us. Muslims note that more of their families have died in our attacks than have Americans or French in attacks by Al Qaeda, the Taliban or the Islamic State. Muslims might view indiscriminate deaths to be just as terrorist as we did the deaths in Paris and New York.

So we won't turn the tide of attacks from the Middle East unless we stop bombing and give assistance to the growing masses of refugees.

(John Schaefer's "What Will Come After Paris" editorial appeared in the November 16th publication of The New York Times)

The Asia Pivot, U.S. Militarism and Agent Orange Relief

Written by Tarak Kauff

In 1954 the fiercely independent Vietnamese crushed the U.S. backed French Colonial Army at Dien Bien Phu and then in 1975, after some 15 years of brutal fighting and millions of casualties, North Viet Nam and the NLF defeated the U.S. military and its proxy South Vietnamese army.

7 May 1954: A Vietnamese soldier waves flag after capturing the French command post in Dien Bien Phu. The fighting began March 13, 1954, and 56 days later, shell-shocked survivors of the French garrison hoisted the white flag to signal the end of one of the greatest battles of the 20th century.

But the U.S. battle for control of Viet Nam still rages. U.S. plans for the Asia Pivot, which seeks to contain China and gain U.S. military and economic control of South East Asia, faces a critical stumbling block in Viet Nam, which is very aware of U.S. global ambitions to dominate and control.

On March 11, 2015, U.S. Army Pacific Commander Gen. Vincent Brooks demanded that Viet Nam stop allowing Russian re-fueling jets to land in its Cam Ranh Bay military base. Brooks claimed Russia was carrying out "provocative flights" and that it was "acting as a spoiler to our interests and the interests of others." The following day Viet Nam rejected the demand in no uncertain terms, calling it "interference in the internal affairs of Viet Nam, a sovereign state that determines its own policies for cooperating with its friends and partners."

Viet Nam continues to trade with China, Russia and the United States. And while Russia supplies most of Viet Nam's military hardware, the Vietnamese are not averse to obtaining sophisticated U.S. military technology as well. At the same time, since Viet Nam has long been able to get whatever it needed from its closest ally, Russia, it is doubtful that they will endanger that relationship by getting too cozy with the U.S.

Viet Nam also has a relationship with China to weigh in the balance, and there is concern among the Vietnamese about how China will react to U.S.-Viet Nam military dealings. The Vietnamese have not forgotten the 1979 border war with China which left 50,000 dead. China and Viet Nam have often been adversaries. In some respects the Vietnamese have more friendship and trust with the U.S. than with their powerful northern neighbor.

Viet Nam has a protective "Three-No's" defense policy: no military alliances, no foreign military bases on Vietnamese territory, and no reliance on any country to combat others.

Nonetheless, the United States continues meddling, both overtly and covertly, attempting to bring Viet Nam into its orbit. Many Vietnamese are well aware of such U.S. machinations and watch closely such organizations as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), both of which have a long history of less than benign covert operations.

In December 2014, police in Ho Chi Minh City arrested two bloggers for alleged anti-government postings. It turns out many dissident bloggers, and probably those two as well, are not simply critical of the Vietnamese government, they are funded by NED and represent U.S.-backed agents of sedition.

The United States, with such agencies as NED and USAID often working closely with the CIA, has wreaked havoc in many countries. Quite often however, they are exposed and by this time most politically sophisticated people are watchful of them.

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The Vietnamese are no less so.

That being the case, USAID, in particular, although still watched carefully by the Vietnamese, has been on somewhat good behavior in Viet Nam since the end of the American war there.

The Vietnamese, as well as U.S. government operatives, recognize that if the organization pursued nefarious ends in all its “international development” projects, it would eventually lose its ability to further the goals of empire. In order to keep up their image, there are times when even the worst elements of oppressive governments actually do good. The Vietnamese are aware of that, as they are of the essential nature of superpowers like Russia, China and the United States.

Recently, there has been concern among U.S. activists over the Asia Pivot, U.S. military goals, and a perceived connection with USAID’s role in distributing increased millions of dollars in congressionally mandated funds for Agent Orange relief in Viet Nam.

Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) pushed through \$21 million over five years for expanded and improved disability programs in Viet Nam specifically to deliver services to disabled families that need the most help.

Chuck Searcy, a Viet Nam War veteran living in Viet Nam for the past 20 years, is a co-founder and now international advisor for Project Renew, which for 14 years has dealt with unexploded ordnance (UXO) and Agent Orange (AO) Relief. Searcy, a member of Veterans For Peace states that “the unwritten message, communicated rather clearly from Sen. Leahy, is that this (new) effort should be targeted to the most severely disabled, with the greatest needs, i.e. families suffering from Agent Orange.”

Some people feel that the Agent Orange relief money is being held as a carrot to induce the Vietnamese to come more into the U.S. military orbit but Searcy contends, “To this point there has not been the slightest indication of any quid pro quo regarding these humanitarian services and the U.S.’s push for TPP approval, or the cozier military relationship the U.S. wants, or decisions about weapons sales to Vietnam—all troublesome issues that bear watching and which veterans living in Viet Nam discuss with their Vietnamese friends in and out of the government. But those questions have little relationship to UXO and AO war legacies, except they should be warnings to the Vietnamese to be very careful in their dealings with the U.S. The war legacies are issues of moral responsibility, redress for harm done, matters of human decency and justice.”

USAID has been the conduit for years for distributing smaller amounts of money for disability programs, some \$3 to \$4 million a year. Still, many are suspect of USAID even more so now with larger sums of money to give, that it will do what it has attempted in many other countries – use aid money to subvert and manipulate or

even overthrow governments that do not exactly conform to U.S. wishes.

But Vietnamese officials involved in UXO and AO relief have told Searcy, “We know all about USAID. We have watched them carefully for years. Don’t worry about us. Our people need your help.”

In Fight Against ISIS, a Lose-Lose Scenario Poses Challenge for West

by Katie Worth

ISIS has lost around a quarter of the territory it once held in Iraq and Syria. Important commanders have died in airstrikes; an estimated 20,000 of its fighters have been killed. The group has run out of high-profile hostages to extract ransom for or publicly assassinate for propaganda purposes.

The ISIS brand needed a facelift: Attacks in Paris, Beirut, and against a Russian airliner over the last three weeks — all of which ISIS has claimed credit for — have given them that. At a time when ISIS is facing setbacks on the battlefield, its success in striking targets beyond territory it has seized in Iraq and Syria has given its loyalists something to cheer about.

The terrible success of these attacks, analysts say, puts Western powers in a lose-lose scenario: Beating ISIS in its self-declared caliphate in Iraq and Syria will likely motivate more international terrorism, as the group, clinging to power and relevancy, seeks to strike back abroad.

Worse yet, a complete collapse of its so-called caliphate could free up tens of thousands of ISIS militants — currently busy defending that territory — to focus on terrorism.

This grim scenario was drawn by analysts as Western leaders continue to grapple over how best to respond to the ISIS threat. Until recently, its grisly reach appeared limited to Iraq and Syria, and to parts of North Africa, the Middle East, Afghanistan and Asia where it has elicited oaths of loyalty from previously-established extremist organizations.

But any notion that ISIS’s tactics would be limited to areas where they already hold sway was shattered as the organization took credit for the Oct. 31 bombing of a Russian airliner over Egypt that killed 224; last week’s twin suicide bombing in Beirut they killed 43; and finally, Friday’s attack on Paris that left 129 dead.

The attacks came more than 13 months since U.S.-led bombing

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against ISIS expanded from Iraq into Syria, an effort that President Barack Obama has defended despite calls for a more aggressive military engagement.

“From the start, our goal has been first to contain, and we have contained them,” Obama said in an interview with ABC News mere hours before the attack on Paris. “They have not gained ground in Iraq. And in Syria it — they’ll come in, they’ll leave. But you don’t see this systemic march by ISIL across the terrain.”

It’s the very success of that containment policy that is motivating the terrorist attacks, says analyst Clint Watts, a fellow at the Philadelphia-based Foreign Policy Research Institute.

“Part of what has sustained ISIS in Syria and Iraq is battlefield success — they pursue battlefield successes and broadcast it on social media,” he said. “They’re no longer having those. And they’re actually losing ground for the first time since they took Mosul in June 2014. So whenever you can’t find the success you need to keep your fan network going, you start to look for other options.”

And it worked, noted analyst J.M. Berger, a fellow at the Brookings Institution and the author of the book, “ISIS: The State of Terror.” ISIS has lost territory near the cities of Kirkuk and Ramadi and the Baiji district in Iraq, and parts of northern Syria. Last Thursday, global media was reporting that ISIS was losing Sinjar province in Iraq, which it held since August 2014. By Saturday, Berger noted, “the big story was ISIS is rampaging out of control all over the world.”

ISIS has always had the capacity to terrorize the heartlands of its enemies, but has not deployed it until recently because they had other means of provocation, Berger said.

“For a while they had hostages they were able to provoke the West with, and they didn’t have to go anywhere to do it,” said Berger.

Now that they no longer have a supply of Western hostages to exploit — only one is known to still be held — they have moved into provocations abroad.

This is hardly a new tactic for extremist organizations: For instance, Somalia’s Al-Shabaab, an Al Qaeda affiliate that controlled large portions of Somalia, including Mogadishu until 2011, has ramped up attacks in neighboring Kenya as it has lost territory in Somalia over the last five years.

“This is classic playbook,” Watts said. “Enrage the enemy, get them coming at this on all planes, and now you can rally the Muslim world against the West. This is exactly what unravels a containment strategy, is you have a terrorist attack, and everyone gets upset, and then they are primed to take action, which is exactly what ISIS wants.”

There is considerable debate about ISIS’s motivations for the international attacks it is now claiming credit for. It may be a desire for revenge against the West. It may be a calculation that the more nations become embroiled in a response to the Syrian civil war, the more difficult it will be for the international community to coordinate a response. It may be a desire to jumpstart an apocalyptic battle with the West that religious texts favored by ISIS have predicted.

Regardless, ISIS has been explicit in stating such attacks help drive people to their cause, as counterterrorism analyst Harleen Gambhir of the Institute of Study of War described in The Washington Post recently. Islamic State publications earlier this year said that terrorist attacks will elicit a harsh anti-Muslim response from Western “crusaders,” which will in turn alienate and radicalize otherwise moderate Muslims, Gambhir wrote.

“The group calculates that a small number of attackers can profoundly shift the way that European society views its 44 million Muslim members, and as a result, the way European Muslims view themselves. Through this provocation, it seeks to set conditions for an apocalyptic war with the West,” said Gambhir.

The U.S. has thus far favored a more moderate response to the attacks. Its containment policy, Watts explained, is designed to wall ISIS into increasingly restricted territory and letting it fail due to its own mismanagement, economic problems, and internal discord, rather than because of the actions of a foreign oppressor.

“ISIS gets a lot of its money by taking the wealth of the places it captures, and we’ve held them back from any major conquests in the last months, so right now they’re squeezing blood from a stone, economically speaking,” said Berger. “That’s not something they can do indefinitely, so if they reach a tipping point, we could see ISIS collapse in a very short amount of time. The problem is we don’t really know how long that will take to happen, and a lot of bad things can happen between now and then.”

But the more “bad things” happen, the less palatable a slow pace of advance against ISIS will seem to Western leaders. Already, France has begun aggressive military actions in response to last week’s attack, calling them an “act of war” by ISIS.

“The question is will the West have the patience to let the containment policy work,” said Watts. “The whole idea of terrorism is to get the targets to overreact — and you see it already here, with the backlash at refugees, people calling for more airstrikes, hitting targets that we’re not really sure what they are, just to show symbolically that we’re doing something.”

But losing patience and using pure military might to decimate ISIS’s hold on its territory might do nothing to stem its international terrorist ambitions, said Berger.

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“One issue is they already have a lot of people deployed abroad. And a second issue is if you went in with force and took their territory away from them, you’re freeing up tens of thousands of fighters who are currently involved in policing the Islamic State, securing its borders, running checkpoints — all those guys are free to do terrorism then, if they don’t get killed in the attack,” Berger said. “In terms of a happy ending any time soon, I find it hard to imagine.”

Regardless of approach — containment or stepped-up military aggression — the West is likely to suffer more attacks, because there are so many potentially dangerous people in Europe now, according to Watts.

“Where (Western leaders) have fallen down is that they’ve let this problem fester for four years,” he said. “They let the borders in Turkey flow, they let their own citizens flow in and out of Turkey, they let them fight with (Al Qaeda affiliate) Al Nusra and ISIS, they’ve let them come back into the country, they haven’t done programs to counter violent extremism at home, they haven’t done other programs to try to rehabilitate their communities — so what’s happened in Paris is completely unsurprising to anybody who’s been watching the foreign fighter flows over the last five years.”

Time To End The Myth

*By Barry Ladendorf,
President, Board of Directors
Veterans For Peace*

In a July 16 Associated Press article, “Atomic Bomb Test Marks 70th Birthday Amid Renewed Interest,” Duane Hughes, retired physicist, is quoted as saying that the “history of the Trinity test is important because it helped end World War II and set the stage for a Cold War arms race.”

No doubt the testing and use of atomic bombs set the stage for the Cold War arms race, but that we needed to drop the bombs to end the war is an ongoing American myth that needs to end now.

When the United States broke the Japanese code, the U.S. government was aware that on July 13, 1945, Japan had contacted the Soviet Union to express its desire to surrender and end the war.

President Truman was aware three months before he ordered the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, that, according to Swiss and Portuguese sources, the Japanese government, knowing they could not win, wanted to begin the process of surrendering. The one thing the Japanese wanted was to retain the emperor. Presidential advisor Jimmy Byrnes convinced

President Harry S. Truman that dropping the bombs would allow the United States to dictate the terms to end the war and let the Soviets and the world know we had the “bomb.”

What was the reaction of America’s top military leaders who led the allies to victory?

General Douglas MacArthur, commander of the allied forces in the Far East during the war, stated he was never even consulted about using the bomb against Japan. According to Norman Cousins, consultant to MacArthur during the occupation of Japan, MacArthur stated that had he been consulted, he would have said that he saw no military justification for using the bomb and that if the United States would simply have agreed to allow the emperor to stay the war might have been over weeks earlier.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, when briefed on the atomic bomb tests in New Mexico and of their planned use against Japan, expressed his belief that there was no need to use the bomb because Japan was already defeated, and that the United States should not shock the world by the use of a weapon that was no longer necessary to save American lives. General “Hap” Arnold, commander of the Army Air Corps, and General Omar Bradley shared Eisenhower’s opinion.

Perhaps one of the strongest critics of using the bomb was Admiral William Leahy, chief of staff to both President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Truman. Leahy said, “It is my opinion that the use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan.” In Leahy’s opinion, by dropping the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, “we had adopted an ethical standard common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages.”

Even former President Herbert Hoover weighed in, telling Truman in May 1945 that if he were President he would, “make a short-wave broadcast to the people of Japan — tell them they can have their Emperor if they surrender — that it will not mean unconditional surrender except for the militarists — you’ll get a peace with Japan — you’ll have both wars over.”

In spite of this considered and widespread opposition by senior military officials who prosecuted the war and from a former president, Truman ordered that Hiroshima and Nagasaki be bombed. On August 9, the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki and when the Japanese government did surrender, they were permitted to keep the Emperor. Hiding behind the myth may make it easier to accept the fact that we used this diabolical weapon in a senseless slaughter of hundreds of thousands of people. Let’s end the myth and accept responsibility for what our nation did.





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Chapter 56**

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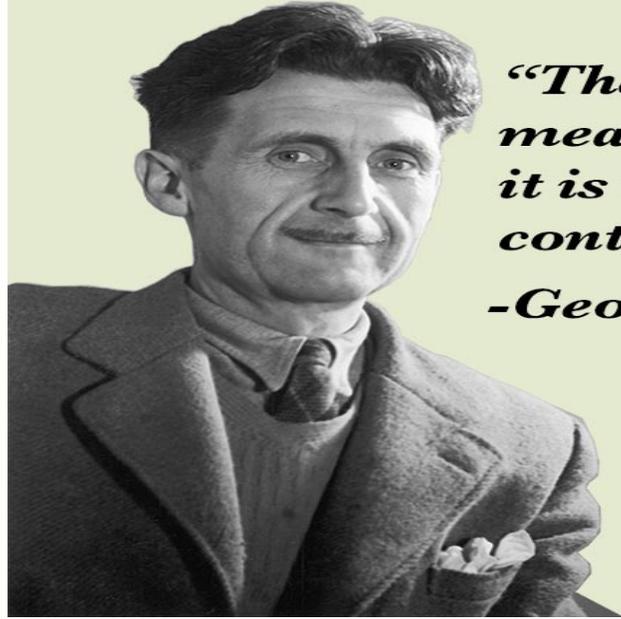
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LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

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, 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.



*“The war is not
meant to be won,
it is meant to be
continuous.”*

-George Orwell

Submitted by Don Swall

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