



THE FOGHORN NEWS

CUTTING THROUGH THE FOG OF WAR * VETERANS FOR PEACE HUMBOLDT BAY * CHAPTER 56

JUNE 2020

ONLINE CONVENTION
AUGUST 2ND-9TH, 2020

8 Day Annual Convention Now Online!
by the VFP 2020 Online Convention Committee

We are excited to announce Veterans For Peace's first Online Convention! We know that many of us will miss being able to greet each other in person but we also know that each and every one of us wants to make sure all of our members are safe and healthy.

The theme of this year's convention is "Human Rights over Nuclear Might." Since our founding, Veterans For Peace has had it in our goals "to

See page 3: "Convention"

VETERANS CALL ON THE MILITARY TO STAND DOWN
#JUSTICEFORGEORGEFLOYD

VFP: National Guard Troops Stand Down!

Veterans For Peace calls for the immediate withdrawal of the Minnesota National Guard. We are appalled to see military weapons, vehicles and equipment once again de-

ployed in U.S. cities to control community members who are reacting to a long history of state-sanctioned violence. When an already embattled community is subjected to militarized intimidation, by design, their environment becomes a war zone. We call on all those who are serving with the National

See page 9: "George Floyd"

The opinions expressed in The Foghorn News are those of the author(s) and may not reflect the opinions of the editor or the Humboldt Bay Chapter of Veterans For Peace

US Needs No Fixing – It is Already Totally FIXED

by Brian Willson

It continues to be very difficult for we US Americans to acknowledge that our political system and its capitalist economy is deeply corrupt and *fixed*, that we find it easier to always distract ourselves by demonizing others. In some ways, it is irrelevant [whether the Clinton and Podesta emails were leaked or hacked, as the Democrats created the hoax of Russiagate to avoid severe self-examination](#) of their own corruption and deceptive practices. The Demo-

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UN Coronavirus ceasefire efforts 'catastrophic failure'

by Al Jazeera News

The international community's attempts to forge a global ceasefire to help curb the spread of the coronavirus have been a "catastrophic failure," Oxfam International said in

a new report published on Tuesday.

Oxfam said fighting continues across many conflict-torn countries despite a March appeal from United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for warring sides to lay down their weapons.

The problem was compounded by a diplomatic failure at the United Na-

tions Security Council (UNSC), years of weak investment in peace-building efforts and arms continuing to flow into conflict zones, Oxfam said in the report: Conflict in the time of Coronavirus.

"We expected leadership from the Council as well as many of those countries who say they support a

See page 8: "Ceasefire"

Veterans For Peace Invites You to Join

Veterans For Peace, Inc., (VFP) is an international organization of men and women veterans of all eras, many of whom served in Viet Nam, the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and other military conflicts.

VFP was founded in 1985 as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit educational and humanitarian organization. Since then it has become an international organization with members in all 50 states as well as chapters in Ireland, London, Mexico, Okinawa (Japan) and Viet Nam. VFP is the only veteran organization to hold a permanent Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) seat at the United Nations and it is

the first military veterans' organization invited to be a member of the International Peace Bureau based in Geneva, Switzerland. National conventions are held annually and members communicate through quarterly newsletters as well as daily list-serve news and alerts, online discussion groups, and the national and many chapter web sites.

Veterans For Peace Statement of Purpose

We, as military veterans, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work, with others both nationally and internationally:

- To increase public awareness of the causes and costs of war

- To restrain our government from intervening, overtly or covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations

- To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons

- To seek justice for veterans and victims of war

- 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 interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.

Veterans For Peace Objective:

We draw on our personal experiences and perspectives gained as veterans to raise public awareness of the true costs and consequences of [militarism](#) and war - and to seek peaceful, effective alternatives.

Join Us:

We encourage all veterans, family members and supporters to join us in creating a global culture of peace and non-violence. [For the national VFP Newsletter](#) go to: veteransforpeace.org



VA Unlawfully Turned Away Vulnerable Veterans for Decades, Study Says

by Alex Horton

The Department of Veterans Affairs has for decades unlawfully turned away thousands of veterans with other-than-honourable discharges, rendering some of the most vulnerable veterans invisible and desperate for help, according to a study released Thursday.

Systemic misunderstanding of the law within VA about which veterans it should care for — and which should be denied services — has triggered improper mass denial of

care since 1980, the Veterans Legal Clinic at Harvard Law School said in the study, leaving an estimated 400,000 more at risk of never gaining access to health care they may have earned.

The discharges, given for misconduct that can range from drug use to insubordination but not proved in court, are colloquially known as “bad paper” for the lifetime of negative consequences they can have.

Veterans outside the VA system kill themselves at a higher rate than veterans who received recent VA care, the agency has said, and mental health care for veterans with bad paper can lower the risk of suicide, the American Journal

of Preventive Medicine found last year.

VA declined to say whether it unlawfully denied care to veterans. Generally, other-than-honourable discharges make it less likely that veterans will qualify for VA services. But the agency is required by law to accept applications, look for mitigating circumstances that could grant them services, issue written decisions and provide appeal information to veterans.

It didn't happen that way for Dwayne Smith, a Marine Corps veteran who served as an engineer equipment operator in Af-



See Page 7: [Unlawful VA](#)

THE FOGHORN NEWS CALENDAR



WEEKLY EVENTS:

Tuesday and Thursday 11am (PST) Veterans For Peace Social Hour!:

To join go to [Zoom](#) and click join meeting and enter in Meeting ID: 324 812 650

Friday from 5—6pm: VFP Chapter 56

members stand silently for an hour-long Peace Vigil: on the southwest corner of the Arcata Plaza (8th & H Streets) and in front of the Humboldt County Courthouse (5th & I Streets) in Eureka.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

June 19: Juneteenth All Day Virtual Event. The Eureka Chapter of The NAACP & Black Humboldt invite everyone to join us in celebrating Juneteenth 2020!!!
Zoom: Meeting ID: 06192020

Facebook: @BlackHumboldt
The event features local POC vendors, workshop facilitators, music and performances. Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States, celebrating that day in history, June 19, 1865.

July 26—28: National Action to End the Korean War,

Washington DC. Join the Korea Peace Now! Grassroots Network, Peace Treaty Now and the Korea Peace Network in Washington DC to raise a unified voice for an end to the Korean War and peace on the Korean Peninsula.

August 5—9: Veterans For Peace Virtual Convention. See our front page story, or go to: veteransforpeace.org

August 8: Virtual Arcata Floating Lantern Ceremony at 7:30pm on Access Humboldt by Buddhist Peace Fellowship, broadcast from Arcata Marsh.

September 7: 12—3pm Labor Unions Picnic, Sequoia Park, If you attend, “wear the colors” (VFP t-shirt or hat). Bring a food donation (canned or packaged goods), Eureka.

September 19—October 4: Veterans For Peace Tour to Viet Nam

For more info go to: veteransforpeace.org/pressroom/news

Or contact:

U.S. Tour Coordinator
Paul Cox, Board Member,
VFP Chapter 160
510-418-3436 (leave message)
paulcox890@comcast.net

September 27—October 3: Anti-drone Resistance, Creech AFB Las Vegas, Nv., [shut_down_creech](#) (website under development) Camping at the Goddess Temple

October 2—5: Nevada Desert Experience: [codeGreen](#), Join us for Interfaith Resistance to Weaponized Drones, Militarism and Nuclearism, info@NevadaDesertExperience.org 702-646-4814

CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:

Chapter Meetings are held on the First Thursday of each month, 7—9pm.

Normally our meetings are held at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Bayside off of Jacoby Creek Road.

Convention: (From page 1)

end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons" and the week will mark the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. (This year also marks the 75th anniversary of the first nuclear explosion of all time at the Trinity Site, New Mexico, which occurred on July 16, 1945).

While we are so disappointed to not connect with everyone in person, we also see the amazing opportunity this presents for our organization. We

see this as an opportunity to broaden our audience to many folks who have been unable to join us in person and to expand the possibilities of who may be able to participate and present for our workshops.

Everyone in New Mexico has been amazingly generous and allowed us to rebook everything for 2021, so we will not miss out on the opportunity to gather in New Mexico next year!

We are busy making plans on an amazing array of workshops and plenaries and even creative ways to incorporate some

social times. This year's convention will highlight work being done to address nuclear weapons as well as nuclear colonialism and broader topics such as what decolonizing the peace movement looks like and highlight some of the amazing work being done within Veterans For Peace.

We will be updating the website in the coming months with more information, which will include options on how to learn and navigate the convention technology. We will be doing our best to make sure that everyone who

wants to participate will be able to have the technological support needed. Stay tuned for more details!

Signed: 2020 Online Convention Committee ■

P.S. We also are very interested in expanding our volunteer tech team! So if you (or you know a member) who has some technical skills, video skills or even is someone who learns new technology easily and social media skills and would like to help, please email: coleen@veteransforpeace.org



WHO DO YOU REMEMBER ON MEMORIAL DAY?

Memorial Day Letter to my Union President

by Steve Morse

As a retired sheet metal worker, on Memorial Day, I watched the Memorial Day video put out by the general president of my union. This was my response to him.

I appreciate your stress on staying safe during this pandemic, as well as the listing of our 14 members who have died from COVID-19. I also appreciate your speaking of how our union has helped veterans transition from the military to our trade.

I want to comment on how your message affects me as a combat veteran of the Viet Nam War. It is a good thing to support veterans, in our efforts to live productive lives (such as through our union membership and work), and for healing physical, emotional and moral injuries. Yet, it is such a common thing to see this worthy sentiment seamlessly get extended to supporting militarism, something that I believe occurs in your video. This type of thing can be seen easily every Memorial Day, July 4th and Veterans' Day, and is unfortunate and upsetting.

Our willingness to sacrifice and our love of country got manipulated into a brutal war in Viet Nam, that created so much loss among the Vietnamese and among our people in the US. Viet Nam's people or government had never done anything to hurt US people.

Sheet metal has been a good trade for me and helped my family and me to survive and thrive. I have seen so many other Viet Nam veterans who did not thrive. I believe, and many of us veterans believe, that our healing would go better if the country as a whole would have learned the tragic lessons that we learned the hard way. The endless wars of the 21st Century indicate that our country has not.

Although I have worked my entire sheet metal career in the San Francisco Bay Area, like you I grew up in the Delaware Valley. In my case, it was on a dairy farm outside of Kennett Square, PA. I was in the high school class of 1964, and many of us ended up in Viet Nam. At least four people I grew up with died as a result of the Viet Nam war.

Howard Lindcamp got killed in Viet Nam. I was a patrol leader in Boy

Scout Troop 24, and Howard was in my patrol.

Bob Vogelsang, a classmate and buddy, died in 1972. He walked with a limp from a leg wound incurred while walking point in Viet Nam. He became an alcoholic and died in a one-car accident.

Mark Arnold lived a mile from me. A bunch of us kids used to play baseball over at Mark's place. He was a door gunner on a helicopter and died in 1976 of cancer connected with Agent Orange. The Army denied any service connection to the cancer, even though everyone on his ward had the same cancer and had all been door gunners!

Bob Badger was a classmate who died in 1990 from Agent Orange-related illness. I spoke with his widow at a class reunion, who was bitter about the long fight she had with the Army around their refusal to acknowledge Agent Orange as the cause of his fatal cancer.

Of these four, only Howard's name is on the Viet Nam Veterans' Memorial wall.

We are Labor – we are and represent working people. We suffer from war and militarism, as soldiers, soldiers' family

members, and as people whose resources are stolen. The trillion dollar military budget seems to have nothing to do with defending this country from foreign attack. Big corporations may benefit financially from war and militarism but our interests are different from theirs; we in Labor should not support militarism.

Labor can be so much bigger and stronger, and could be key to changing this country for the better. We in Labor have done many worthy things, but a 6% rate of unionization in the US private sector does not warrant complacency. There is so much we need to rethink about ways to redirect our efforts. This pandemic is the time, when so many aspects of our future are both uncertain and wide open. Support for the Green New Deal, and for redirecting resources away from the military toward working people's needs should be very high on our to-do list.

In solidarity,

Steve Morse ■

Steve Morse is active in veteran and anti-war groups including Veterans For Peace, and the GI Rights Hotline.



Photo: Essay author S. Brian Willson

Fixed: (From page 1)

crats have ignored working people's needs for at least 40 years as it became corporate. And the large amount of disenfranchisement among US voters due to Jim Crow revitalization, and excluding many felons for life, eliminate many citizens from voting. Then to understand that our entire political system is one big financial scheme preserving an oligarchy of plutocrats, how can we even call ourselves a republic. We have never been a democracy. We are addicted to materialism. It is our stubborn belief in our validity as a nation, certainly as compared to others, that I believe preempts our capacity for the kind of popular revolt we need to be a nation with integrity and a true commitment to justice. This requires a nonviolent revolution that we have yet experienced, though the radical changes in the late 1960s threatened the system as never before with a break out of real democracy.

But how can we possibly ever believe what the US or its agencies say? The basic principle is lying. Since WWII, the US has

militarily intervened in dozens of countries nearly 400 times, covertly thousands of times. It has attempted to overthrow more than 50 governments, attempted to assassinate more than 50 foreign leaders, attempted to suppress popular movements in 20 countries, dropped bombs on at least 30 countries, and has grossly interfered in democratic elections in at least 30 countries and, according to a political science professor at Carnegie Mellon University, has attempted to influence other country presidential elections 81 times between 1946 and 2000. Would the US ever willingly admit these interventionist deeds? And we have no real, genuine free, investigative press, just a corporate one spewing the capitalist, US exceptional rhetoric. What is it we are believing in here in the USA?

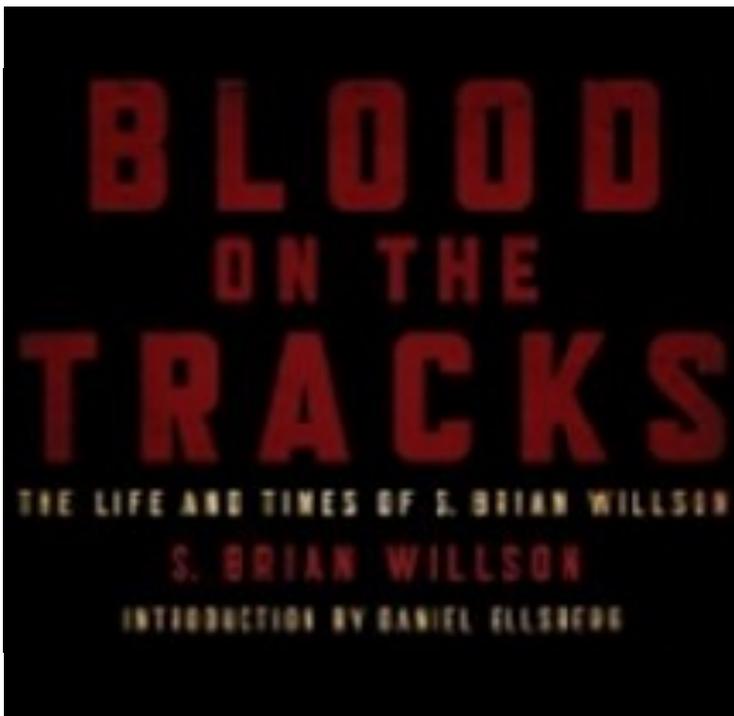
Our official policy is Full Spectrum Dominance, to be militarily superior in all sea spaces, air

spaces, and ground spaces, as well as outer space, cyber space, and mental space between our ears. Currently the US has special ops forces in 150 countries, and is dropping bombs and missiles on at least 7 countries. We preserve a capitalist, class society with now the largest disparity between rich and poor in the industrial world, and one of the worst disparities among all countries. Our capitalist neoliberal interests now cover every corner of the globe such that there is no safe place in the world from US intervention, often conniving, spewing deceit, and acting diabolically beyond most of our comprehension. And it is not possible now for US policy to possess any concern for human beings elsewhere, though we attempt to fool the public by manipulating scenarios with staged photos, while uttering the most ridiculous, self-serving, non-factual rhetoric to justify "humanitarian intervention." We want control of

everything.

Now we want a new cold war, threatening hot war with Russia, [led by the Democrats](#). It is all about demonizing others "out there" to avoid honestly addressing the demons in our own history, our own oligarchic structures, and imperial policies. I just don't understand how we can be so concerned about Putin, or Nicaragua, or Syria, etc., when our system is so globally destructive and undemocratic and unfair at home. Will we support an international movement to intervene into the affairs of the US because our policies are totally endangering all life on the planet? We seem not yet able to organize a popular nonviolent revolution at home to arrest our own criminally corrupt system and the dangerous policies it imposes, while enriching a small few as war making is now the most lucrative path to obscene profits. Will we wake up? Or just continue to point fingers elsewhere and become extinct with no dignity whatsoever? ■

S. Brian Willson is a Viet Nam veteran and trained lawyer. He has visited a number of countries examining the effects of U.S. policy. He wrote a psychohistorical memoir, *Blood on the Tracks: The Life and Times of S. Brian Willson* (PM Press, 2011), and in 2018 wrote *Don't Thank Me for my Service: My Viet Nam Awakening to the Long History of U.S. Lies* (Clarity Press). His web essays can be found at: brianwillson.com. His email is: postmaster@brianwillson.com



U.S. prepared to spend Russia, China 'into oblivion' to win nuclear arms race: U.S. envoy

by Jonathan Landay and Arshad Mohammed

U.S. President Donald Trump's arms control negotiator on Thursday said the United States is prepared to spend Russia and China "into oblivion" in order to win a new nuclear arms race.

"The president has made clear that we have a tried and true practice here. We know how to win these races and we know how to spend the adversary into oblivion. If we have to, we will, but we sure would like to avoid it," Special Presidential Envoy Marshall Billingslea said in an online presentation to a Washington think tank. ■

Published by Reuters May 21, 2020.



Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos and Mark Zuckerberg | Source images by Getty Images

Oxfam: 8 richest billionaires have as much wealth as the world's poorest half

Income inequality 'more shocking than ever before,' NGO said.

by [Marion Sollety](#)

Global inequality is so significant that the eight richest billionaires have as

much wealth as the poorest half of the world's population combined, NGO Oxfam said Monday.

In a [report](#) released ahead of the World Economic Forum in Davos, the charity estimated the funds available to the eight men, including Microsoft founder Bill Gates, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and Amazon's Jeff Bezos, was equal to that of the world's poorest 3.6 billion people.

"It is obscene for so much wealth to be held in the hands of so few when one in 10 people survive on less than \$2 a day," said Winnie Byanyima, Oxfam's executive director.

Oxfam said inequality had jumped significantly between 1988 and 2011, during which time the income of the world's poorest 10 percent increased by \$65 per person per year, while the top 1 percent recorded an annual spike of \$11,800.

The calculations were based on global wealth distribution data

from the Credit Suisse Global Wealth Data book and Forbes' billionaires list, the NGO said.

However, British free-market think tank the Institute of Economic Affairs has questioned Oxfam's methodology, criticizing its use of net wealth figures.

"It is misleading at best to label the average university graduate who has accumulated £50,000 of debt among the world's poorest, without any consideration of their future earning potential," said Mark Littlewood, director general of IEA in a statement, calling Oxfam's conclusion "spurious."

The Oxfam report is the latest in a string that have highlighted income inequality ahead of the World Economic Forum. A report released Monday also showed [inequality was rising](#) across the globe. ■

This article was published by Politico 1/16/17 and updated 5/25/20.



FILE PHOTO: Assistant Secretary for Terrorist Financing in the U. S. Department of the Treasury Marshall Billingslea speaks during a news conference in Riga, Latvia May 16, 2019. REUTERS/Ints Kalnins

ghanistan's volatile Helmand province in 2009. He returned with post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injuries, and his best friend died in his sleep days after they came home.

"That was one thing that changed me," Smith, 31, told *The Washington Post*. His standing in his unit suffered, culminating in an unauthorized absence he used to go home to visit his mother, who was dying of cancer, he said.

Senior leaders offered him a way out as his enlistment neared its end: Take an other-than-honorable discharge or risk a dishonorable discharge later. He saw it as a plea bargain to be with his mother, and in 2012, he left the Marine Corps with bad paper.

Months later, unmoored and in need of care, Smith drifted to VA in search of help. A front-line worker at the Brockton VA outside of Boston looked over his discharge paperwork and sent him away without documenting his visit, he said. Multiple denials followed during the next two years.

"I was supposed to be able to turn to them," Smith, now an athletic trainer for children, said of VA.

His experience is emblematic of the struggles of many of the half-million veterans issued other-than-honorable discharges since 1980, when certain eligibility requirements began to apply, said Dana Montalto, an attorney for the law clinic and co-author of the report.

Many veterans are simp-

ly given a verbal denial, while others are told incorrectly that the only solution is to go back to the Pentagon to try to get their discharge upgraded.

VA could not produce numbers for how many eligibility decisions it has made involving bad paper. The legal clinic estimated the number was around 100,000.

"VA has done more outreach to other-than-honorable former service members in the last few years than ever before," VA press secretary Christina Mandreucci said Wednesday, which includes a call center launched in December to contact veterans who left the military in the past year, including those with bad paper.

VA also sent 444,487 letters sent to veterans with bad paper describing some mental-health benefits granted in 2017.

However, VA pulled their home addresses from Pentagon records—information that could be decades old for a Vietnam or Gulf War veteran, for instance, who may have used a parent or guardian's address at the time of enlistment.

The result: 2,580 veterans with other-than-honorable discharges received care at VA in 2018, the agency said in a blog post last year, one day after a reporter in Seattle detailed the case of a veteran denied care.

"That is horrifically low by any measure," said Kris Goldsmith, the associate director for policy and government affairs at Vietnam Veterans of America. "It shows how

unserious VA's leadership is in getting these guys and gals into the system." It is impossible to know how many veterans VA has turned away without evaluations, Montalto said.

In one case detailed in the study, a Vietnam veteran who left with bad paper suffered from untreated post-traumatic stress disorder for 50 years after he was incorrectly told he was ineligible for VA care. An attorney working on his case helped him win the benefits he earned, the report said.

Much of the confusion comes from inside VA, the report found, after records requests revealed guidance for staff that was wrong or incomplete at VA facilities across the country.

The Pittsburgh VA Medical Center used a clip art image of a thumbs-down to describe other-than-honorable discharges, implying they are a non-starter. VA's hospital in El Paso incorrectly told a veteran that only honorable and general discharges lead to VA care, the study said. Those cases contradict other guidance VA has provided.

In 2017, VA allowed veterans with bad paper to use VA services in mental-health emergencies, and a law expanded that coverage a year later.

For tracking purposes, the legal clinic characterized bad paper as any discharge besides those considered honorable. Some of the categories — dishonorable and bad conduct — can be the result of serious crimes in uniform. But others, like in Smith's case, are adminis-

trative actions enforced by a commander, not a judge or jury in a military court. Often, they are infractions that mushroom from physical or mental wounds, such as self-medicating with drugs or alcohol after combat or sexual assault. From 2011 to 2015, the drawdown period from the highest troop levels in Iraq and Afghanistan, more than half of the 91,764 troops separated for misconduct were diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injuries before discharge, the Government Accountability Office found.

They can also be the result of discrimination — the study found that more than 100,000 veterans in the LGBT community left the military with bad paper from the end of World War II until 2011, when the "don't ask, don't tell" policy was repealed.

After a five-year battle, Smith ultimately won his appeal and received VA care and compensation in 2018 for his traumatic brain injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder. And that was only after Montalto represented him pro bono.

"That was the biggest win," he said, "to walk into VA with my head held high." ■

This article was published by the Washington Post March 5, 2020. Author Alex Horton is a general assignment reporter for The Washington Post. He previously covered the military and national security for Stars and Stripes, and served in Iraq as an Army infantryman.

ceasefire, but who nevertheless remain active participants in conflicts around the world, conducting military operations, selling arms and supporting third parties," said Oxfam Interim Executive Director Jose Maria Vera.

On May 8, the United States, one of the five permanent members of the UNSC, refused to vote on a UN resolution for a global ceasefire. Oxfam said this was merely the latest in a series of failures that are sustaining conflicts at a time when peace and international cooperation are needed.

The report argues that only a halt in violence would allow an effective response to COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus.

Last month, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned the UNSC that the coronavirus pandemic was a threat to international peace and security "potentially leading to an increase in social unrest and violence that would greatly undermine our ability to fight the disease."

Guterres, who called for a ceasefire in all global conflicts on March 23, said the pandemic had hindered all regional, national and international conflict resolution efforts "exactly when they are needed most."

Investing in 'peace efforts'

Oxfam said two billion people living in fragile and conflict-affected states were now at heightened risk from the illness, including in areas where health systems are crip-



Oxfam says two billion people living in fragile and conflict-affected states are now at heightened risk from the illness [Khaled Abdullah/Reuters]

pled and hospitals bombed, forcing them to flee into crowded camps.

In the last year alone, the international community spent more than \$1.9 trillion on their militaries. This would have paid for the UN's coronavirus appeal more than 280 times, according to Oxfam.

"Arms exporting countries must stop fuelling conflict and instead make every effort to pressure warring parties to agree to a global ceasefire and invest in peace efforts that can bring a meaningful end to conflict," Vera said.

The report highlights the situation in the Central African Republic, where the UN announced a suspension of its humanitarian response in areas where armed groups have broken ceasefires; in Myanmar, where the army has [rejected](#) domestic and international calls for a comprehensive ceasefire; and in Yemen, where parties involved in the conflict continue fighting despite a unilateral truce.

The WHO on Monday [ordered](#) its staff in Houthi-ruled areas to stop work, citing "credible risks and perceived risks" to their security. ■

This article was published by Al Jazeera News May 11, 2020.

Please join VFP in appealing to U.S. Ambassador to the UN Kelly Craft to support the Secretary General's call for a GLOBAL CEASEFIRE!

Veterans For Peace, as a United Nations Department of Global Communication affiliated NGO, is most gratified to see UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres make his plea for a worldwide ceasefire during this global pandemic. The first line of the Preamble of the UN's Charter says that they originated to save "succeeding generations from the scourge of war." But sadly, because the UN was created by the victors of WW2 who remain the

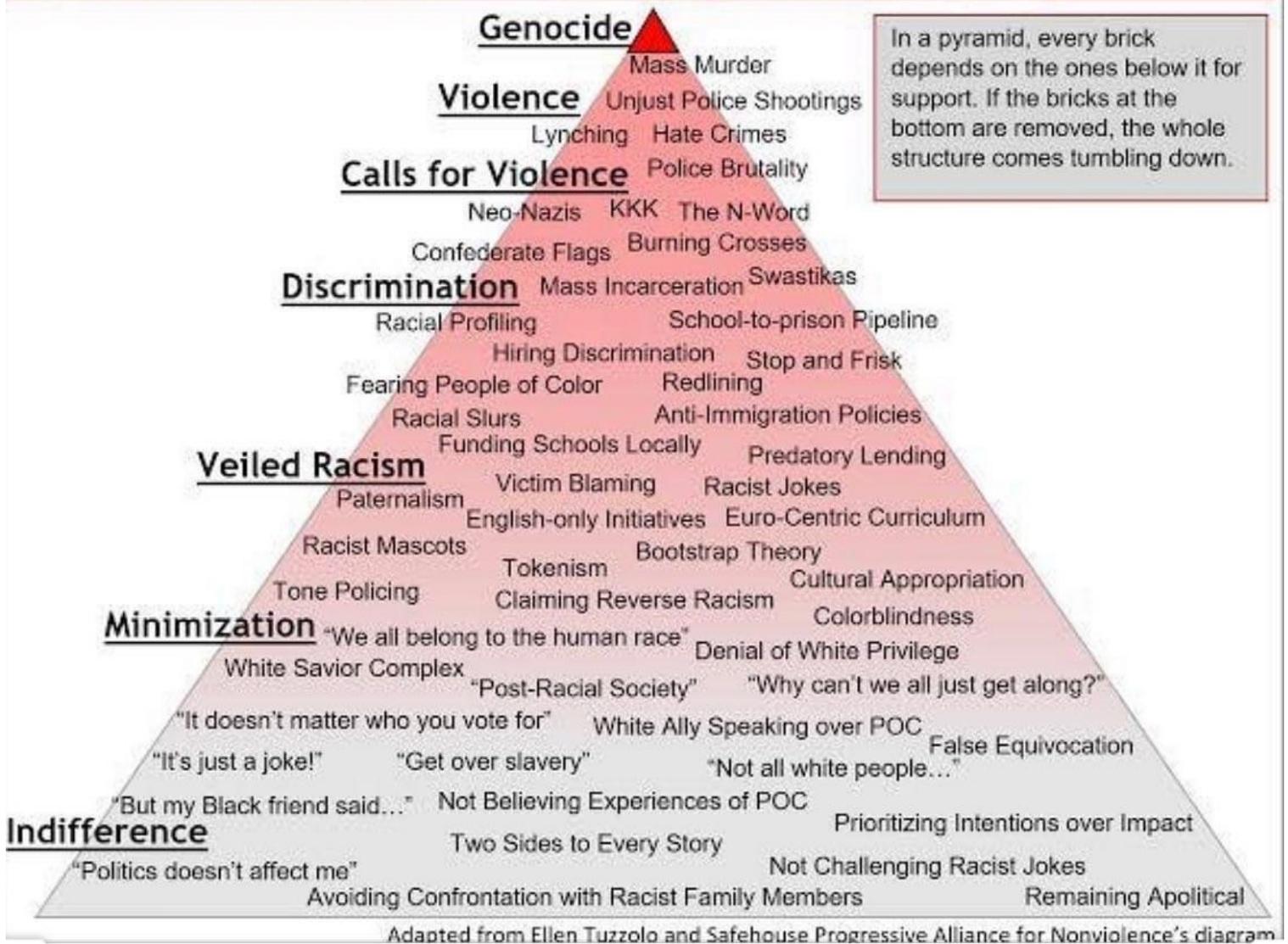
powers of the world, and because the UN depends for funding on those same militarily and economically dominant nation-states, primarily the U.S., much more often than not the UN is very quiet on war. But not right now. As Guterres said in the call, "The fury of the virus illustrates the folly of war." Even permanent Security Council members Britain, France, and China support the ceasefire call, but the US and Russia are resisting it. Twelve parties to conflicts around the world have expressed interest in silencing their guns.

Sadly, other methods of aggression like sanctions are not mentioned in Guterres' statement. Nonetheless, the strong condemnation of armed conflict when cooperation is so needed for health care is most welcome. ■

TAKE ACTION: Sign the online petition at:

veteransforpeace.salsalabs.org/globalceasefirepetition/index.html

Pyramid of White Supremacy



In a pyramid, every brick depends on the ones below it for support. If the bricks at the bottom are removed, the whole structure comes tumbling down.

[George Floyd](#): (From page 1)

Guard to refuse to serve violent and racist interests.

Veterans For Peace denounces the ongoing instances of police violence against Black bodies and people of color, this time resulting in the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota. We also stand in opposition to the State of Minnesota's and the Minneapolis police force's militarized response to the right to protest.

Learning nothing from the now seemingly endless examples of ineffective attempts to silence protests with militarized violence—from Ferguson to

Baltimore to New Orleans to Standing Rock—political figures continue to call on more military to quell the powerful resistance seen from the people in Minneapolis who demand justice. We continue to see the escalation of threats of violence from those in power—from Trump's tweets threatening to shoot protestors to the governor's decision to send in the national guard.

As Veterans For Peace, we know that increased militarization in our communities will never bring peace. We know that peace is only achieved with a strong commitment

to justice. As veterans who served in various wars, we know there is a connection between increasing racist violence in the United States and the massive indiscriminate killing of hundreds of thousands of people in other lands. Growing racism against black, brown and Muslim people in the United States is a reflection of the racism that justifies killing non-white people abroad. The U.S. military deliberately uses racism to motivate young men and women to kill.

As veterans, we know what it's like to be called to a "duty" that goes against our conscience.

We urge all current National Guard members to lay down their weapons and refuse to fight against their neighbors and fellow community members. We urge you all to be fully informed as you make profound choices with possibly serious consequences. We urge any troops facing possible deployment to Minneapolis or already there to contact the National Lawyers Guild Military Law Task Force at (619) 463-2369 help@militarylawhelp.com for referral to a civilian attorney to discuss your options.

See page 10: "George Floyd"

George Floyd: (From page 9)

Our nation's consistent option for militarization and the use of deadly force when it is not needed—at home and abroad—is exactly why we find ourselves in this situation. It makes no sense to think more violence and trauma heaped upon the Minneapolis community will quell the unrest. The Governor has moved beyond using a militarized police force to using the military. He is relying on intimidation and fear to end this. The only thing that will quiet this storm is justice. ■

**Ways to take action:
Donate to organizations
on the ground:**

[Minnesota Freedom Fund](#)
[Black Visions Collective](#)
[Reclaim the Block](#)

Sign this Open Letter:

[Open Letter to Veterans to Recently Activated Minnesota Troops](#) from [About Face: Veterans Against the War](#) by going to:

medium.com/@VetsAboutFace



Donald J. Trump ✓
@realDonaldTrump

This Tweet violated the Twitter Rules about glorifying violence. However, Twitter has determined that it may be in the public's interest for the Tweet to remain accessible. [Learn more](#)

...These THUGS are dishonoring the memory of George Floyd, and I won't let that happen. Just spoke to Governor Tim Walz and told him that the Military is with him all the way. Any difficulty and we will assume control but, when the looting starts, the shooting starts. Thank you!



Mary Ann Vecchio kneels over the body of the student Jeffrey Miller, who was killed by Ohio National Guard troops during an antiwar demonstration at Kent State University on May 4, 1970. (Caption from New York Times.)

Introducing The Foghorn News Editor

by Shawn Leon

I was sitting in attendance at the Arcata D Street Neighborhood Center as someone climbed on stage with an American flag on a stand. "No!" several people shouted, and the crowd perked up trying to grasp what was happening. The person carrying the flag was insistent that the flag should be on display. Organizers of the event explained they removed the flag at the request of the speaker, Brian

Willson, a Viet Nam veteran and outspoken advocate for peace. It was early 2002. That was the first time I saw Brian. The flag was carried off stage, and the person carrying the flag tried to negotiate that it be put on the other side of the room. This created discord among the room. The flag was removed from the room. Brian explained during his speech that he has a "visceral" experience every time he sees an American flag: The sight of the flag makes him sick to his gut, instantly. This is because of his direct experience of war, and what he learned the American empire truly

stands for.

Brian demonstrated conscientious objection by objecting to the flag, which represents the US Empire, being placed at his side as he delivered a speech. Conscientious objection includes small acts of disobedience to unjust authority. It is not just the acts of religiously inspired draft dodgers, or soldiers that refuse to keep fighting after they see the truth behind the lies of war while on the battlefield, as Brian experienced. For Brian, the moment came while in a bombed village where many bodies lay dead. As he walked he came to a place where, he said, "there were too many bodies to proceed. I looked down and saw this emaciated young woman, clutching 3 children. Because her eyes were open, I was frozen looking at her eyes. I was crying, and gagging. I realized she had no eye-lids or much facial skin, as it had been burned off by napalm. I was in psychic shock, but felt that

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The Editor: (From page 10)

the woman and three small children she was trying to clutch were part of my family, and I couldn't conceive of why I was there, or what I was doing. It was an epiphany that changed me forever."

Luckily for me, and for the City of Arcata, Brian decided to move here from Santa Cruz after this incident with the flag at the D Street Neighborhood Center. I got to know him and remember many long talks with him in which he generously worked to impress on me truths about peace and justice. I am grateful for those talks. And I am grateful for his work with the local Veterans For Peace (VFP) chapter which I saw swell in numbers as US wars expanded in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I attended VFP meetings even though I am not a veteran, as I saw my personal history greatly impacted by war. The men in my family have been combat veterans in many wars including the American Revolution, Civil War, WWI, and WWII. My father, a marine enlistee, was kept in Okinawa during the Viet Nam war because of his Military Occupational Specialty.

I remember Brian making a stand in those VFP meetings for taking seriously the initial personal sharing at the beginning of the meeting. He insisted that people act from the gut more than many people recognize, and that if we don't give space for people to share what's really happening in their lives then the "business" items on the agenda will not penetrate very deep

into people's lives, or out into the world.

The Foghorn News grew largely out of Brian's sharing in those groups. Sometimes he would share thoughts he had written down that week, and it's my understanding someone encouraged him to allow those writings to be shared on the local VFP email list. This morphed into The Foghorn, which was edited by Jim Sorter for over 10 years before he passed away recently. I have fond memories of Jim, and know he put a lot into The Foghorn.

It is with this history in mind that I accepted the offer of being the editor. It is a great honor and also a great responsibility. I will offer local veterans who have never heard of Veterans For Peace a window into what VFP stands for and how to get involved, and at the same time to create a space for VFP members to share thoughts or important events, and to highlight the work of the local peace community. I aim to highlight the stories and perspectives of veterans and whistleblowers such as Smedley Butler, Philip Agee, Daniel Ellsberg, William Binney, Chelsea Manning, Brandon Bryant, Edward Snowden, and Brian Willson. ■

Shawn Leon is a journalist and activist located in Humboldt Bay, California. Contact him at shawnleon33@gmail.com



California Police Used Military Surveillance Tech at Grad Student Strike

by [Lauren Kaori Gurley](#)

The California National Guard provided military surveillance equipment to the University of California at Santa Cruz's Police Department in order to surveil and police [the UC Santa Cruz graduate student](#) wildcat strike earlier this year, [documents acquired](#) through the California Public Records Act show.

California National Guard, the state's federally funded military force, provided so-called "[friendly force trackers](#)," a military surveillance technology used to track U.S. troops in military combat, to monitor pickets, according to emails dated February 11 and 13. Police responding to the strike [also had access to LEEP](#), a federal surveillance portal operated by the FBI. The emails show that law enforcement was monitoring student protest groups and social media to plan its response.

The California Office of

Emergency Services (Cal OES) also assisted with law enforcement response.

The unauthorized wildcat strike began in early February when teaching assistants at UC Santa Cruz walked off the job and withheld grades to demand an \$1,412 increase to their cost of living stipend. The so-called Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) strike [then spread to UC Santa Barbara](#), UC San Diego, and UC Davis, and protests broke out at nearly every campus in the University of California system. In late February, UC Santa Cruz fired more than 70 striking workers who were withholding grades from their teaching appointments...

Emails show that Cal OES provided extensive support to UC Santa Cruz police throughout the strike, including a mobile command van...The emails—and the surveillance tech—show that in many ways law enforcement treated this as something like a military operation. ■

This is an excerpt from an article published by Vice May 15, 2020.

To read the full article go to [vice.com](#).



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The Foghorn News Editor

Shawn Leon

THE FOGHORN NEWS: CUTTING THROUGH THE FOG OF WAR

CONTACT US

FOR MORE INFO OR TO

GET INVOLVED

CONTACTVFP56@GMAIL.COM

WWW.VFP56.ORG

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CHAPTER 56

P.O. BOX 532

BAYSIDE, CA 95524

707-273-9815