



VETERANS FOR PEACE
HUMBOLDT BAY
CHAPTER 56

THE FOGHORN

VOL 23, ISSUE 22
MARCH
2010

“Cutting Through the Fog of War”

Beautiful Losers

Los Tainos

We Need You Now!

By Rob Hepburn

You were gentle,
your God was kindness
your religion was life.
Your women and men were equal
and you always gave thanks
to the fish, the animals
and the plants that gave you life.
Instead of war
you played football.
On the first encounter
Christopher Columbus
admired your friendly spirit
and your beautiful strong bodies.
Then he wrote in his journal that
“you would make good slaves.”
Los Tainos - Beautiful Losers
we need you now!
Because now war has become a giant vampire
sucking us all pale!
Because now greed has eaten too much
of the earth!
Because now the sky is falling,
the ice sheets are melting
and the land is baking
while the sea rises up
and the species die off!
The conquerors are now named
Exxon-Mobil , Chevron, and Wal-Mart.
Their greed now threatens us all!
Los Tainos - Beautiful Losers.
The earth is in great pain
and we need you now!
It is said that you were exterminated,
snuffed out by greed and sheer meanness.
But is your spirit still alive?
Is your spirit still alive somewhere deep
inside ourselves?
Los Tainos - Beautiful Losers
please come back?
For if we are to live
it is now your turn
to rule the world!

What happened to Article I of the Amendments to the Constitution?

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; of the right of people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for redress of grievance”.

PEACEFUL PROTESTERS ROUGHED UP, ARRESTED BY OBAMA’S PENTAGON

Submitted by Richard Gilchrist

Is this how Obama thanks those who are taking his call for the abolition of nuclear weapons seriously? He has them roughed up and arrested for standing with signs outside Vandenberg AFB in California while his Pentagon fires “missile defense” tests into the heavens above the Pacific Ocean?

For years people have been protesting outside Vandenberg AFB when the base launches missiles. Now and then the military police would grab one of the organizers and arrest them but often nothing was done at all. But on January 31, just as another \$150 million “missile defense” test was launched from the base, the Obama led Pentagon had virtually everyone who was at the protest, legally standing outside the base, arrested. In one case the military police threw Judy Evered onto the ground where two security guards held her with one soldier’s knee in her back. Her subsequent booking was interrupted because she had to be taken to the hospital in an ambulance for a shoulder injury she sustained after she was already in custody. Evered, a member of WILPF, is in her 80’s.

This was a particularly important “missile defense” test because the Pentagon promoted it as a practice to simulate “a nuclear attack by Iran”. Of course Iran has no nuclear weapons today nor does it have any launch vehicles capable of reaching the continental U.S. But truth and facts don’t matter when you are out to create a new enemy in the minds of the American people. Fiction becomes reality, war is peace. Brainwashing it is called.

In the first test of its kind involving Vandenberg, a U.S. Air Force ICBM launched from the Marshall Islands (the Ronald Reagan Test Range) was aimed at southern California. The Ground-Based Interceptor launched from Vandenberg, about 60 miles northwest of Santa Barbara, lifted off at around 3:45 pm, but did not succeed in shooting down the target missile (supposedly from Iran) which was launched six minutes earlier from the Reagan Test Range.

“They completely dismantled the demonstration,” said protest organizer MacGregor Eddy who is a WILPF and Global Network member. She went onto reiterate that the base was told well in advance of the demonstration which was initially scheduled for January 21, as was the interceptor test, both of which were grounded due to large southern California storms at the time.

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Since November, the new base commander has decided to require I.D.s from demonstrators. There is no way that a base commander, on his own, is going to start demanding ID's from legal public protesters and make such a decision to completely disrupt and arrest eight out of the eleven people at a peaceful vigil. These orders have come from higher up and in the end the president of the U.S. has to be held responsible for escalating this provocative attack on peaceful protest outside a U.S. military base.

Obama talks big about wanting disarmament but then he qualifies this by saying that it might not happen "in his lifetime." Then he moves, two years in a row, to increase military spending and continues the Bush administration policy of surrounding Russia and China with "missile defense" systems that are actually part of the U.S. first-strike program. The U.S. "missile defense" systems would pick-off any retaliatory missiles fired by Russia or China after the U.S. had launched the initial attack. The U.S. Space Command has actually been computer war-gaming such a first-strike attack on China for the past several years.

In a statement prior to the January 31 missile launch Western States Legal Foundation Director Jacqueline Cabasso said, "Further, U.S. development of missile defenses endangers prospects for deeper U.S. and Russian nuclear arms reductions and threatens to scuttle agreement on a follow-on to the START treaty. To add insult to injury, every U.S. test launch from the Marshall Islands causes tremendous environmental damage to surrounding land and water areas and compounds the historical injustice to the indigenous Marshallese people."

Obama can't have it both ways. He can't go around talking nice about nuclear disarmament and then continue taking active steps to develop and test new generations of advanced war fighting systems and expect that Russia and China will just sit back and watch without reacting. And if Obama was serious about real nuclear disarmament he would not allow his Pentagon operatives to harass, rough up, and arrest activists who are legally opposing wasteful and destabilizing missile tests. You don't treat your political allies in such a manner.

Once again we see the clear evidence that Obama is the quintessential magician – he says one thing but if we closely watch his other hand we see the revelation of his real agenda, which is nothing more than a continuation of the Bush war making program, but this time with a friendly smile and a well-turned phrase.

Bruce K. Gagnon, Coordinator, Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, PO Box 652. Brunswick, ME 04011 (207) 443-9502

Peace Poetry Contest Moving Ahead – Help Needed

By Veterans' Education and Outreach Project Committee

As most everyone knows, the VEOP Committee is moving ahead on the Chapter's first Peace Poetry Contest for Humboldt County high school students. Details of the contest can be seen on the Chapter's web site at www.vfp56.org.

The Committee recently solicited price quotes for printing of the 2010 Peace Poetry Anthology from local printers. We expect to let the contract for printing services in the near future after the deadline for receipt of poetry submissions. At the same time, we are in the process of creating the layout and design of the Anthology. A member of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, a co-sponsor of the contest, has volunteered to do the layout work.

The Committee has also decided on the date and time for the public reading event:

What: 2010 Peace Poetry Celebration

When: Friday, May 7, 2010

Time: 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Where: Humboldt Unitarian Universalists' Fellowship Hall
23 Fellowship Way, Bayside, California (approximately 0.6 mile southeast along Jacoby Creek Road from the Bayside Grange; Google Earth coordinates: 40.836819, -124.053677)

MARK THE DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR!

While it may seem that the VEOP Committee has things well under control, **WE NEED YOUR HELP** in order to make this contest a resounding success. Areas we need help with are:

- Judges – Urgent! Want to be a poetry judge? Know anyone that would?
- Contacting businesses to buy advertising in the Anthology.
- Help with organizing the event.
- Tabling at the event (tentative)
- Signs – Need 3 or 4 large signs to set out on the roads.
- Ushers – Need several to help during the public reading.
- Food/snacks (tentative) – Need help putting this together
- Photography

If you are able to help with any of the foregoing tasks, please contact:

- Jon Reisdorf, 822-4595, jonreisdorf@hotmail.com;
- Carl Stancil, 616-6405, carlstancil@gmail.com;
- Richard Gilchrist, 443-1226, rdgglg@northcoast.com; or
- 'Nate' Lomba, 269-0528, nslomba@reninet.com.



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A SOLDIER'S VISION OF PEACE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

ANN WRIGHT

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SEXUAL TRAUMA IN THE MILITARY

JEFF PATERSON

US MARINE & RESISTER

COURAGE TO RESIST & GI RIGHTS

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SOLDIER'S PROJECT & PTSD

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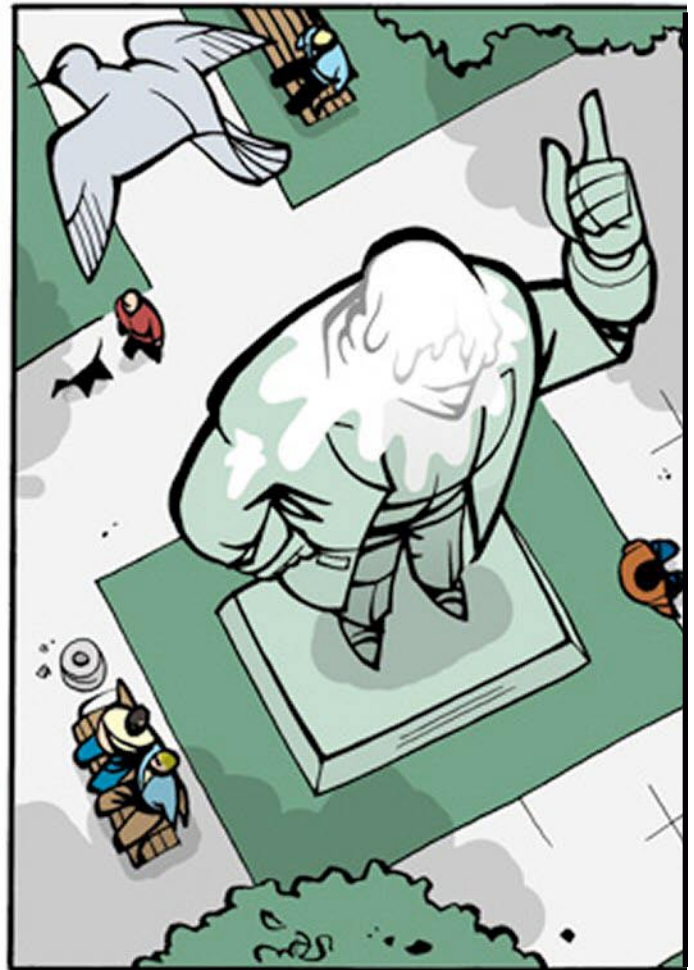
(CHAPTERS/INDIVIDUALS PLEASE CONTRIBUTE TO THIS FUND)

CONFERENCE IS HOSTED BY

VETERANS FOR PEACE IRAQ VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR

MILITARY FAMILIES SPEAK OUT GOLD STAR FAMILIES SPEAK OUT

VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR



He Helped Me see History from other Perspectives.
 — HOWARD ZINN 1922-2010 —

NEXT VFP56 MEETING
 WILL BE HELD ON
 MARCH 4TH, 7:00PM
 AT 550 UNION STREET
 IN ARCATA

No Justice Forever - America's New Foreign Policy of Indefinite Detention

*Tuesday 23 February 2010
 By: Lt. Col. Barry Wingard*

As evidenced by the recent outpouring of generous support for the people of Haiti, America remains a caring and compassionate nation. But when it comes to human rights and the rule of law, the United States falls woefully short, trailing behind the rest of the civilized world. Case in point, the US government is seriously considering indefinite detentions for some Guantanamo detainees.

Sen. Lindsey Graham said last weekend that the White House may support a new law that would allow the indefinite detention

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MAJOR FUNDRAISING PROGRESS FOR INCOPAH

February 23, 2010

By William Jeff Karr

Greetings Foghorn readers. Thank you for the chance to update you on the progress of Incopah Retreat and Wellness Center and the Veterans Spirit program. The most recent development is a substantial donation that puts us well on our way to funding the building of structures needed to house our program participants just outside of Willow Creek when we open in summer 2010.

So far the donation has resulted in \$1300 cash and a 40' x 8' container full of office furniture, equipment and supplies to be liquidated for additional funds. During the week of February 15th, I was joined by Dave Berman, Dallas Roberts, Jack Reece, Zak Weaver, Tom Suro and Jade Chase-Dunn, collectively spending 130 hours moving these items into the storage unit from the offices of the now-closed AMG Data Services in Arcata (owned by international media conglomerate Thomson Reuters). Sale of the merchandise is now underway and being overseen by Blaine Ryan of Local Thrift and Online Auctions, a locally owned small business in Eureka. If you are interested in purchasing any items used in an office, please help us by contacting Blaine at 707-442-7662 or myself at 707-498-5010.

I'm also excited to report on a huge order for 600 cases of KARR'Z Sunset Sauce, the barbecue sauce recipe I created and will be selling as another revenue source for Incopah. I'm currently negotiating for a co-packer to manufacture the product and for ingredients at quantities large enough to meet demand. You will see this in stores and be able to grill with this yummy stuff this summer.

Support for Incopah has never been greater. I'm really grateful to The Ink People for accepting our project into the DreamMaker program. This means we have non-profit status and a fiscal sponsor in the truest sense – they do our bookkeeping and hold onto our money.

We are also still following up with the VFW National Foundation in Kansas City where Iraq war veteran Chad Blanchet and I stopped on our cross-country Incopah promotional tour last fall. I'm optimistic about securing their formal endorsement for our assistance of veterans, thought it is not yet a done deal.

Of course, now is a great time for increased help from VFP too. Please contact me to get involved. I look forward to inviting you on our first weekend camping expedition on the Incopah grounds planned for April, with more details coming in next month's Foghorn.

William Jeff Karr, Executive Director, Incopah Retreat and Wellness Center, 707-498-5010

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of some terrorism suspects. Meanwhile, last month the Guantanamo Detainee Review Panel finally recommended which detainees should be released and which ones should face trials. It came as little surprise that more than 100 detainees were cleared for release while about 35 will be tried either by federal court or military commission. Yet surprisingly, approximately 50 detainees have been recommended for indefinite detention without trial. The administration claims they are considered too dangerous to be released, but too difficult to prosecute even in the conviction-friendly commission system.

These 50 detainees present a perplexing situation for the United States. The United States prides itself on being a world leader on human rights and the rule of law, and has been consistently outspoken in its criticism of human rights abuses by other nations. But in its zeal to demonstrate a "tough on terrorism" stance, the United States has failed to live up to these values.

One of the hallmarks of the American judicial system is the presumption of innocence. If arrested for an alleged crime, we have the right to a trial, to confront our accusers and to present evidence in our defense. Indefinite detention bypasses these rights, short circuits due process and turns the presumption of innocence on its head. In short, it presumes guilt and offers no remedy to challenge that presumption.

It is tempting to assume the decision to hold detainees indefinitely is based on a review of credible evidence. But if the evidence is so persuasive, why not introduce it in a court of law and secure a legitimate conviction? Time and again, federal courts have proven fully capable of handling terrorism cases. In fact, the Bush administration successfully prosecuted at least 319 terrorism or terrorism-related cases in civilian courts.

If the evidence is not reviewed by a court of law, who does review the evidence and determine the fates of individual suspects? The evidence is classified and the identities of those making the determinations are closely guarded. This process is entirely secret and inherently un-American. A system that authorizes indefinite detention based on secret evidence can only result in distrust and suspicion.

I represent Fayiz al-Kandari, a Kuwaiti citizen who has been imprisoned at Guantanamo Bay for more than eight years without a trial. In my July 2009 letter to The Washington Post, I explained how every time I visit my client he asks whether I have news of justice for him. Each time, I am forced to answer, "I have no justice today." Assuming Fayiz would someday have his "day in court," I prepared him for the probability that "justice" would come in the form of a military commission - a second-rate judicial system largely designed to permit rumor as evidence. Unfortunately, I am now left to wonder whether Fayiz will ever be afforded any semblance of justice.

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Admittedly, under the laws and customs of war, a nation may detain “enemy combatants” for the duration of an armed conflict. But in an “armed conflict” as ambiguous as the “war on terrorism,” can this same standard possibly apply? If so, when can we expect the armed conflict to end? Terrorism dates back to the 14th century or earlier and has been employed throughout history. If the war on terrorism will not end until terrorism no longer exists on Earth, Fayiz will never breathe free.

We are at a key juncture in our nation’s history. We can give in to political expediency and fear or we can restore the rule of law and uphold our country’s founding principles. Let’s not go down the slippery slope of indefinite detentions.

Lt. Col. Barry Wingard is a military attorney who represents Fayiz Al-Kandari in the Military Commission process and in no way represents the opinions of his home state. When not on active duty, Colonel Wingard is a public defender in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

PEACE OF THE ACTION LETTER FROM CINDY SHEEHAN TO VFP

Dear Friends,

Veterans For Peace (the organization and the members) and I go way back--way before Camp Casey in the Summer of 2005.

Exactly five weeks after Casey was killed in Iraq, his dad and I traveled six hours down the coast to attend Arlington West in Santa Barbara after I saw a report on CNN that featured the monument and Veterans for Peace.

The night before I went to Crawford to demand a meeting with George Bush, I spoke at the VFP convention and you all know what happened next--Bush did not meet with me, and we set up Camp Casey. I could not have done that or the rest of my activities since then without the help of you Vets and Veterans for Peace.

Now, my new organization, Peace of the Action (www.PeaceoftheAction.org) is setting up an anti-war camp on the lawn of the Washington Monument in DC called, Camp OUT NOW. Camp OUT NOW (named by VFP member, Ward Reilly from Baton Rouge) will be a sustained camp and we will perform daily acts of civil resistance until our demands are heard and met.

I am writing to invite you to all or part of this courageous and audacious action.

I am once again honored by the support of Veterans For Peace and I look forward to being involved in Camp OUT NOW with you all.

*In love, peace and solidarity,
Cindy Sheehan and the Peace of the Action Team*

The Australian Army Tested Chemical Weapons on a Town Which Now has Deaths From Cancer 10 Times the State Average

By Barbara McMahon

Military scientists sprayed the toxic defoliant Agent Orange in the jungle that is part of the water catchment area for Innisfail in Queensland’s far north at the start of the Vietnam War.

The Sun-Herald last week found the site where military scientists tested Agent Orange in 1966. It is on a ridge little more 100 metres above the Johnstone River, which supplies the drinking water for Innisfail.

Forty years later the site - which abuts farmer Alan Wakeham’s land - is still bare, covered only in tough Guinea grass, but surrounded by thick jungle.

“It’s strange how the jungle comes right up to this site and then just stops. It won’t grow any further,” Mr Wakeham said.

Agent Orange was sprayed extensively in Vietnam to defoliate the jungle and remove cover for North Vietnamese troops. It contains chemicals including the dioxin TCDD, which causes forms of cancer, birth defects and other health problems.

Researcher Jean Williams found details of the secret Innisfail tests in the Australian War Memorial archives.

“These tests carried out between 1964 and 1966 were the first tests of Agent Orange and they were carried out at Gregory Falls near Innisfail,” said Ms Williams, who has been awarded the Order of Australia Medal for her work on the effects of chemicals on Vietnam veterans.

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“I was told there is a high rate of cancer there but no one can understand why. Perhaps now they will understand.”

Ms Williams unearthed three boxes of damning files.

One file showed the chemicals 2,4-D, Diquat, Tordon and dimethyl sulphoxide (DMSO) were sprayed on the rainforest in the Gregory Falls area in June 1966.

The file carried the remarks: “Considered sensitive because report recommends use of 2,4-D with other agents in aerial spraying trials in Innisfail.”

Ms Williams said: “It was considered sensitive because they were mixing together all the bad chemicals, which just made them worse. They cause all the cancers.”

Ms Williams claims a file which could indicate much wider testing in a project called Operation Desert had gone missing. The contents were marked “too disturbing to ever be released”.

“Those chemicals stay in the soil for years and every time there is a storm they are stirred up and go into the water supply,” Ms Williams said.

“The poor people of Innisfail have been kept in the dark about this. But these chemicals cause cancer and deformities that are passed on for generations. It is shocking. I am just an 83-year-old war-weary battler. I don’t want any more medals, I just want justice for the people of Innisfail.”

Queensland Health Department figures show Innisfail, which has a population of almost 12,000, had 76 people die from cancer in 2005. That is four times the national rate of death from cancer and 10 times the Queensland average.

Australian War Memorial director Steve Gower confirmed the file on Operation Desert could not be found.

Australia and Britain opened a joint tropical research unit at Innisfail in 1962. In 1969 the Liberal defence minister Allen Fairhall flatly denied chemical warfare experiments had been associated with the unit at Innisfail.

But last week The Sun-Herald found the site and an old digger, a decorated veteran of three wars, who had worked on the experiment.

Innisfail local Ted Bosworth, 86, fought in the New Guinea campaign in World War II, copped a bullet in the lungs in the Korean War for which he was awarded the Military Medal and was in the Army Reserve during the Vietnam War.

In 1966 he drove scientists to the site where the spraying occurred.

“There was an English scientist and an Australian. I heard they both later died of cancer.

“They sprayed by hand. The forest started dying within days. By three weeks all the foliage was gone. The scientists always denied it was Agent Orange. They were pretty cagey.”

Mr Bosworth confirmed photos The Sun-Herald took were of the experiment site. “That is the area they sprayed. That is it. It was on top of the ridge next to grassland in the trees. It hasn’t changed much in all these years.”

Innisfail RSL president Reg Hamann suffers terrible effects from Agent Orange he was exposed to during the Vietnam War.

“A lot of my unit have died of cancer. I’ve got cancer of the oesophagus and stomach. I have to sleep on a special bed that raises me 17 degrees or everything in my stomach rises up. I’ve had a subdural hemorrhage, a heart attack and a quadruple bypass.

“It passes on to the next generation. My son was born with a deformed lung. My daughter has got the same skin problem I have from Agent Orange. Now my grandkids are going to get it.”

Mr Hamann is angry at the lies and deceit about the effects of Agent Orange on veterans and their families. Now he’s discovered that while he was fighting in Vietnam the Australian government was experimenting with Agent Orange upriver from his home town.

“We were sprayed regularly by Agent Orange as they cleared the river banks. We had no idea how dangerous the stuff was. They’d fly over us and give us a squirt just for fun and wiggle their wings. We took it as a joke. But the stuff turned out to be a curse.”

“I saw in Vietnam what Agent Orange did to an area and I am shocked to learn they used it here. It was kept secret. The army didn’t tell anyone. It was just some of the old army guys and local farmers who knew they were experimenting up there.

“I believe it must have something to do with the high cancer rates in Innisfail. The amount of young people in this area who die of leukaemia and similar cancers to what I got from Agent Orange is scary. The authorities are scared of digging into it as there would be lots of law suits.

“The sad part is the number of kids who get cancer here. It’s been that way at least since I came here in 1970. That means it can’t be chemical spraying on the bananas as they only came here 15 years ago.

“They’ve always used Innisfail as guinea pigs. They did it in World War II and they did it during Vietnam. It’s time to set it right.”





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WE'RE ON THE WEB:
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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.

DEATH TOLL IN AFGHANISTAN REACHES 1000

Nine years into the war on Afghanistan, the number of U.S. casualties that have resulted in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the operation in Afghanistan, has reached 1000. As President Obama plans on escalating the war in Afghanistan, Veterans For Peace will also increase its opposition to this and all wars as an instrument of foreign policy. VFP has been working hard to resist this war and will continue to do so.