



VETERANS FOR PEACE
HUMBOLDT BAY
CHAPTER 56

THE FOGHORN

FEB/MAR
2016

“Cutting Through the Fog of War”

GOLDEN RULE UPDATE

By Chuck Dewitt

To hear the weather man tell it we are in a terrible drought. But, if you check the current record we are actually way above normal for rain. The rivers are at or close to flood stage and all the nearby reservoirs are full to the top and it's also been cold, well it is winter..

After the voyage of The Golden Rule to San Diego and back to Humboldt the crew presented me with a long list of things that needed attention or replacing or added to the boat. The galley was on the top of the list so we've concentrated efforts to it. Mike has redesigned the galley to make it easier to work in and is nearly finished with a custom built ice chest that is down and out of sight. The ice box itself is made of Hydrotech, fiber glass and Styrofoam. I've had to help with the glassing as the toxic fumes are too much for Mikes sensitive old guy nose.

Before starting on the galley Mike rebuilt the Navigation light boxes so we could, if necessary, sail at night. He also at the same time changed the pin rails, they're now much sturdier and can be used as rat lines for climbing up the main mast. David Sangiovanni rewired the light boxes and changed the routing of wires a tad. David also moved the bilge pump forward two frames and installed a new float switch, which required adding longer hoses to expel bilge water.

I have rebuilt the navigation binnacle making it a bit larger and about a foot taller. This will enable the helms man to see the G.P.S. and radar screen more clearly with out having to bend over while at the tiller.

The really big accomplishment this winter was done by Ed Fracker, actually that's Captain Fracker. He redesigned and sewed new sail cradles for all three sails using the red Tan Bark material that our sails are made of. His design makes it easier to raise and lower the sails. Not only is it faster but it may even require one less sail handler. If you can when the boat is in your port you should come and visit, the new covers really add to the over all beauty of the vessel.

There's still several jobs to tackle before the boat can leave later this spring. Captain Zerlang wants to pull the Rule out of the water perhaps as early as March. We want to clean the bottom, repaint the entire hull, and the sonar dome and rudder hardware need minor attention.

Captain Fracker has designed a set of spreaders for the Mizzen mast, that and moving the back stays aft one frame should solve the bucking problem we experienced in heavy seas.

Helen Jaccard has been on the phone almost non stop in the past month organizing a sailing agenda for this summer. When we leave out of here we'll sail north along the coast up to as far as Vancouver B.C. and then back to Humboldt Bay. Helen is arranging many stops both up and back in as many ports as possible. We are even contemplating a voyage up the Columbia River towards the Hanford Nuclear site.

Starting with this report I'm adding dozens of new addresses to our mailing list that we've collected at our many ports of call. Interest in our mission is expanding greatly and Veterans For Peace National has been a huge help.

The U.S. Nuclear Weapons industry is evolving and a large percent of our tax monies are going into this evolution and no one seems to be aware of the changes. This is one of the reasons we exist. We can and should be considered a weapon of mass education..

Sincerely submitted by Chuck DeWitt, Restoration Coordinator for The VFP Golden Rule Project.





The Golden Rule back in Humboldt Bay after visiting San Diego and the VFP Convention decked out with her new sail covers.



Saudi Arabia Is Killing Civilians With US Bombs

Marjorie Cohn

The aftermath of an airstrike which killed a barber and a 12-year-old girl, in Saana, Yemen, Sept. 5, 2015. What began as a Saudi-led aerial campaign against the Houthi rebels has become so broad and vicious that critics accuse the coalition of collectively punishing people living in areas the Houthis control; here, shops and apartments rather than a nearby military base were hit. (Photo: Tyler Hicks / The New York Times) The aftermath of an airstrike which killed a barber and a 12-year-old girl, in Saana, Yemen, September 5, 2015. What began as a Saudi-led aerial campaign against the Houthi rebels has become so broad and vicious that critics accuse the coalition of collectively punishing people living in areas the Houthis control; here, shops and apartments, rather than a nearby military base, were hit. (Photo: Tyler Hicks / The New York Times)

Saudi Arabia has engaged in war crimes, and the United States is aiding and abetting them by providing the Saudis with military assistance. In September 2015, Saudi aircraft killed 135 wedding celebrants in Yemen. The air strikes have killed 2,800 civilians, including 500 children. Human Rights Watch charges that these bombings “have indiscriminately killed and injured civilians.”

This conflict is part of a regional power struggle between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The Saudis are bombing Yemen in order to defeat the Houthi rebels, who have been resisting government repression for a long time. Iran has been accused of supporting the Houthis, although Iran denies this. Yemen is strategically located on a narrow waterway that links the Gulf of Aden with the Red Sea. Much of the world’s oil passes through this waterway.

A United Nations panel of experts concluded in October 2015 that the Saudi-led coalition had committed “grave violations” of civilians’ human rights. They include indiscriminate attacks; targeting markets, a camp for displaced Yemenis, and humanitarian aid warehouses; and intentionally preventing the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The panel was also concerned that the coalition considered civilian neighborhoods, including Marra and Sadah, as legitimate strike zones. The International Committee of the Red Cross documented 100 attacks on hospitals.

Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions prohibits the targeting of civilians. It provides that parties to a conflict “shall at all times distinguish between the civilian population and combatants and between civilian objects and military objectives and accordingly shall direct their operations only against military objectives.”

Saudi Arabia is also engaging in serious individual human

rights violations.

In January 2016, the Saudi government executed 47 people, including a prominent pacifist Shia cleric, who had been a leader of the 2011 Arab Spring in Saudi Arabia. Many of those executed were tortured during their detention and denied due process. Most were beheaded. This horrifies us when ISIS does it. Yet State Department spokesman John Kirby protested weakly, “We believe that diplomatic engagement and direct conversations remain essential in working through differences.”

Also in January 2016, Palestinian artist and poet Ashraf Fayadh, a Saudi citizen whose family is from Gaza, was sentenced to death by beheading. His alleged crimes: “apostasy,” or renouncing Islam, and photographing women. “Throughout this whole process,” Amnesty International UK found, “Ashraf was denied access to a lawyer - a clear violation of international human rights law.”

Both Saudi Arabia and the United States are parties to the Geneva Conventions, which define as grave breaches willful killing, willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, and torture or inhuman treatment. Grave breaches are considered war crimes. Also prohibited are “the passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples.”

Although neither the United States nor Saudi Arabia are parties to the Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court, that statute sets forth standard aider and abettor liability provisions. It says that an individual can be convicted of war crimes if he or she “aids, abets or otherwise assists” in the commission or attempted commission of the crime, “including providing the means for its commission.”

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Next VFP56 meeting will be held
on Thursday, March 3rd at
7:00 PM.
Meeting will be held at 24 Uni-
tarian Fellowship Way, Bayside,
Jacob 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.



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The U.S. government is the primary supplier of Saudi weapons. In November 2015, the U.S. sold \$1.29 billion worth of arms to Saudi Arabia. It included more than 10,000 bombs, munitions, and weapons parts manufactured by Raytheon and Boeing, as well as bunker busters, and laser-guided and “general purpose” bombs. A month earlier, the United States had approved a \$11.25 billion sale of combat ships to Saudi Arabia. The U.S. also provides intelligence and logistical support to the coalition. During the past five years, the U.S. government has sold the Saudis \$100 billion worth of arms.

These sales have greatly enriched U.S. defense contractors. Why has the United States “usually looked the other way or issued carefully calibrated warnings in human rights reports as the Saudi royal family cracked down on dissent and free speech and allowed its elite to fund Islamic extremists,” in the words of New York Times’ David Sanger? “In return,” Sanger writes, “Saudi Arabia became America’s most dependable filling station, a regular supplier of intelligence, and a valuable counterweight to Iran.” Saudi Arabia, and close U.S. ally Israel, opposed the Iran nuclear deal.

In April 2015, the U.S. government prevented nine Iranian ships loaded with relief supplies from reaching Yemen. President Barack Obama also sent an aircraft carrier to the area to enforce the Saudi embargo on outside supplies. According to UN estimates, 21 million people lack basic services, and over 1.5 million have been displaced. UNICEF notes that six million people don’t have enough food.

Moreover, the U.S. government seeks to prevent scrutiny of Saudi human rights abuses in Yemen. In October 2015, the United States blocked a UN Security Council sanctions committee proposal that would have required the committee’s chair to contact “all relevant parties to the conflict and stress their responsibility to respect and uphold international humanitarian law and human rights law.” The U.S. government is also violating domestic law by providing the Saudis with military aid. The Leahy Law prohibits U.S. assistance to foreign security forces or military officers “if the Secretary of State has credible information that such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights.” Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), for whom the law was named, told Foreign Policy: “The reports of civilian casualties from Saudi air attacks in densely populated areas [in Yemen] compel us to ask if these operations, supported by the United States, violate” the Leahy Law.

Furthermore, 22 U.S.C. section 2304 provides that “no security assistance may be provided to any government which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.”

The Arms Trade Treaty obligates member states to monitor exports of weapons and make sure they do not end up being used to

commit human rights abuses. Although the U.S. has not ratified the treaty, we have signed it. Under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, a signatory is prohibited from taking action inconsistent with the object and purpose of the treaty.

The U.S. government should immediately halt arms transfers and military support to Saudi Arabia and support an independent investigation into U.S. arms transfers and war crimes in Yemen. The United States must stop participating in and call for an end to the de facto blockade so that humanitarian assistance can reach those in need, engage in diplomatic efforts to end the conflict, and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty.

In an interesting twist, the Saudis contributed \$10 million to the Clinton Foundation before Hillary Clinton became Secretary of State. In 2011, the year after the State Department had documented myriad serious human rights violations by Saudi Arabia, Hillary oversaw a \$29 billion sale of advanced fighter jets to the Saudis, declaring it was in our national interest. The deal was “a top priority” for Hillary, according to Andrew Shapiro, an assistant secretary of state. Two months before the deal was clinched, Boeing, manufacturer of one of the fighter jets the Saudis sought to acquire, contributed \$900,000 to the Clinton Foundation.

Hillary now says the U.S should pursue “closer strategic cooperation” with Saudi Arabia.

Marjorie Cohn is a professor at Thomas Jefferson School of Law, former president of the National Lawyers Guild, and deputy secretary general of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers. Her most recent book is Drones and Targeted Killing: Legal, Moral, and Geopolitical Issues. See www.marjoriecohn.com

WAR PROTEST 2003

By Ira Chernus

Who even remembers the moment in mid-February 2003, almost 13 years ago, when millions of people across this country and the planet turned out in an antiwar moment unique in history? It was aimed at stopping a conflict that had yet to begin. Those demonstrators, myself included, were trying to put pressure on the administration of George W. Bush not to do what its top officials so visibly, desperately wanted to do: invade Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, garrison it for decades to come, and turn that country into an American gas station. None of us were seers. We didn’t fully grasp what that invasion would set off, nor did we imagine a future terror caliphate in Iraq and Syria, but we did know that, if it was launched, some set of disasters was guaranteed; we knew beyond a doubt that this would not end well.

We had an analysis of the disaster to come and you could glimpse it on the handmade signs we carried to those vast demonstrations

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(some of which I recorded at the time): “Remember when presidents were smart and bombs were dumb?”; “Contain Saddam -- and Bush”; “Use our might to persuade, not invade”; “How did USA’s oil get under Iraq’s sand?”; “Pre-emptive war is terrorism”; “We don’t buy it, liberate Florida”; and so on. We felt in our bones that it was no business of Washington’s to decide what Iraq should be by force of arms and that American imperial desires in the Greater Middle East were suspect indeed. And we turned out to make that point so impressively that, on the front page of the New York Times, journalist Patrick Tyler referred to us as the planet’s second superpower. (“The fracturing of the Western alliance over Iraq and the huge antiwar demonstrations around the world this weekend are reminders that there may still be two superpowers on the planet: the United States and world public opinion.”)

“At a time when Americans should have been in the streets saying hell no, we better not go, the Bush administration and then the Obama administration were repeating the same militarized mistakes endlessly, while turning the Greater Middle East into a charnel house of failure.”

Of course, this vast upsurge of global opposition would prove to be right on the mark, while all the brilliant policymakers and pundits in Washington who beat the drums loudly for war were desperately wrong. And yet the invasion did happen and, in its disastrous wake, we, not they, were wiped out of history. None of us would be consulted when the retrospectives began. No one would want to hear from those who had been right about the invasion (only officials and “experts” who had been dismally wrong). In the process that pre-war movement of ours would essentially be erased from history.

Mind you, we knew that, whatever we did, George W. Bush was bound and determined to invade Iraq. As I put it that February, “I’m not a total fool. I know -- as I’ve long been writing in these dispatches -- that this administration is hell-bent for a war. The build-up in the Gulf during these days of demonstrations has been unceasing. I still expect that war to come, and soon. Nonetheless, I find myself amazed by the variegated mass of humanity that turned out yesterday... The world has actually spoken and largely in words of its own. It has issued a warning to our leaders, which, given the history of ‘the people’ and the countless demonstrations of the people’s many (sometimes frightening) powers from 1776 on, is to be ignored at the administration’s peril.”

On that, unfortunately, I was wrong. We were indeed ignored and it didn’t prove to be “at the administration’s peril” (not in the normal sense anyway). The large-scale antiwar movement barely made it into the war years. There were a couple of massive demonstrations still to come, but as time went on, as things got worse, as the situation in Iraq devolved and those millions of demonstrators were proven to have been unbearably on the right side of history, the antiwar movement itself essentially disappeared, except for scattered veterans’ groups and heroic protesters like the members of Code Pink.

At a time when Americans should have been in the streets say-

ing hell no, we better not go, the Bush administration and then the Obama administration were repeating the same militarized mistakes endlessly, while turning the Greater Middle East into a charnel house of failure. Today, as Pentagon officials prepare for their next set of forays, interventions, drone assassination campaigns, and special ops raids in, among other places, Libya -- and what could possibly go wrong there? -- next to no one is pressuring or opposing them, next to nothing is in their way. As a result, Ira Chernus’s new piece, “America’s New Vietnam in the Middle East,” on what’s missing from the missing antiwar movement in America.

Grangers, the Time is Now

BY ELLEN TAYLOR

North Coast Journal 2.4.16

In “The State of the Grange” (Jan. 3), Linda Stansberry detailed the delicate state of health in which an organization at the bedrock of American democracy finds itself. Civil war is the worst kind of catastrophe, and why the National Grange started rejecting parts of itself after 150 years is baffling. But the case isn’t hopeless. Sometimes, it takes a real fracas like this one to awaken us to what we stand to lose. The Grange was once an organization of fire-breathing agrarian radicals, and it can be again.

I fell in love with the Mattole Grange when I first stumbled into it one Fourth of July in the early 1970s. I was utterly dazzled by the spectacle Linda described: ranchers in big hats leading their beaming wives in slow circles across what seemed like an endless dance floor, gleeful young stompers who insisted that the band play “Running Bear” again and again, phalanxes of children racing between or under them. For a jaded New Yorker, tired of anonymity and sad politics, it was a sort of Brigadoon, a vision of community. I joined right away.

Local 569’s relationship with the upper echelons of the state and national Grange hierarchy at the time is best described by the Rabbi’s blessing for the Tsar in Fiddler on the Roof: “God bless and keep the Tsar ... as far away from us as possible!” There was a dim sense that it was not friendly. We paid our dues.

Everyone learns something in school about the Grange’s heroic fight against the railroads, land-grabbers and real estate speculators in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It was the champion of the little farmer, the Jeffersonian ideal. Here is a fragment from Grange Melodies, a popular songbook published in 1905: “Brothers of the plow! The power is with you! The world in expectation waits for action strong and true! Oppression stalks abroad, monopolies abound, their giant hands already clutch the tillers of the ground!”

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And here, the opening lines of 1874's Farmers' Declaration of Independence: "When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for a class of people, suffering from long-continued systems of oppression and abuse, to rouse themselves from an apathetic indifference to their own interests, which has become habitual..." and so, gloriously, on.

Humboldt County granges were some of the biggest firebrands. This resolution was passed by the Ferndale Grange in 1878:

"Whereas, a people view with alarm the growing tendency [by legislation] of a bourbon aristocracy ... which if not checked will finally reduce the working classes of America to mere slaves and vassals. ... The toiling masses of this country are today to the banks and corporations what the peons of Mexico are to the aristocracy of that so-called Republic. ...

"Resolved that we look upon this bourbon element with suspicion and distrust in their effort to subvert that form of government bequeathed to us by our fathers, and to erect instead a semi-despotic government controlled by a centralized aristocracy."

These were our great-grandparents. What might they do if they were alive today, when the richest 1 percent owns more than the rest of the world? When 85 families own more than 3.5 billion people combined?

The Grange's passionate defense of freedom and equality ebbed away over the last century and, by the time I joined, it was generally perceived to be in the pocket of Big Ag. It did not rise to the defense of small farmers during the 1980s collapse in the Heartland, when they were being bankrupted by agribusiness and land was being concentrated into fewer and fewer hands. The Grange did not prevent small towns being turned into rural ghettos with farmers reduced to low-wage workers in river-polluting concentrated animal feeding operations. It backed the weakening of regulations on pesticides and herbicides, and of the Endangered Species Act. Recently a U.S. Supreme Court case, with very questionable particulars, of a 75-year-old farmer sued by Monsanto for patent violation, drew this comment from the National Grange: "If the Supreme Court didn't rule in favor of Monsanto's argument, there would be little incentive to produce and promote inventions if a company lost all profit-making potential after the first sale of a replicating product."

This salute to the profit motive is repugnant to the Grange's Statement of Purposes, which requires that the pursuit of knowledge have the objective of increasing the public and social good.

Nowadays, many farmers don't own their own seed: They sign a contract for a one-year lease. Small farms continue to disappear. Big Ag controls much of our lives. Monsanto and Syngenta are on

the point of merging. Dow and Dupont merged late last year. Six transnational corporations control 63 percent of the seed market and 75 percent of the agrochemical market. Three firms control 49 percent of the farm machinery market. Six giants control 90 percent of the world's food. Recently, California passed Assembly Bill 2470 which outlaws small farmers from freely selling or trading their seeds.

But the Grange has deep, deep roots. Its rituals go back to ancient times when the awful powers of the natural world were present and revered. We need that spirit now. It resonates with the wisdom of the indigenous peoples of the Americas. The above-described awful powers are currently in our face.

Now is the time to join the Grange! It is a democratic institution; a change in policy is possible. This is no time for a civil war or for California Grangers to back away and form another organization. There are plenty of them out there already and none have the venerability of a 150-year-old voice. California grangers need to argue their case for the planet on the national level. They must take up the old fight again to roll back monopolies that are accelerating the destruction. And, not just because of the beauty of its historic and capacious halls, but by the generosity of its inspiration, the Grange's voice will be heard.

Ellen Taylor, a 40-year Humboldt County resident and long-time granger, lives in Petrolia

WILPF QUILT RAFFLE

Contact:
Carol Woods
707.822.5711
WILPF@humboldt1.com

The Humboldt Branch of WILPF, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, is raffling off a beautiful 78 x 86" cotton quilt. Sales of the raffle tickets are our biggest fundraiser of the year!

Funds benefit our projects: annual Edilith Eckart Memorial Peace Scholarship, purchase of The Jane Addams Children's peace related books (<http://www.janeaddamspeace.org/jacba/>), which are donated to the library in Eureka, Arcata and School District Library. Also, other activities, such as our annual March 8 International Women's Day free event.

The quilt is currently on display in the window of Arcata Exchange on the Arcata Plaza until February 25.

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From February 29-March 5 it will be in the window at Northtown Books, Arcata.

In late March will be in the window of Bubbles at 10th and H Streets, Arcata.

**1 raffle tickets = \$5
5 raffle tickets = \$20**

The quilt will also be on display on March 8 at the Arcata Playhouse from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. during the 5th Annual WILPF's Celebration of International Women's Day free event, which features sing-along led by Jan Bramlett and friends, silent auction, information from groups providing services to women and the Raging Grannies. Refreshments will be served. Donations accepted.

The quilt winner will be announced this fall.

Please spread the word and help us raise funds for peace and freedom.

For more information, call 822-5711 or contact WILPF@humboldt1.com.

WINFRED SAMPLE

LONG TIME MEMBER OF VFP56 WINFRED "WIN" SAMPLE HAS PASSED AWAY LEAVING AN EMPTY SPOT WITHIN OUR RANKS.

WIN, A WWII ARMY VETERAN, SERVED IN GERMANY IN AN INFANTRY UNIT IN 1944-45 WAS VERY PROUD OF HIS AFFILIATION WITH VFP AND DEDICATED MUCH OF HIS LIFE TO PURSUITS OF PEACE.

HE WILL BE MISSED BY HIS MANY FRIENDS.

WINFRED SAMPLE: PRESENTE

**October 7-10 SOAW Gathering in
Nogales, Arizona
*February 10, 2016***

0We are still feeling the energy and power from the thousands who attended the 25th anniversary Vigil at the gates of Ft. Benning, GA last November! During the weekend, SOA Watch Field Organizer María Luisa Rosal and movement Founder, Father Roy

Bourgeois made an important announcement about SOA Watch's decision to move the popular mobilization to the U.S./Mexico border in the Fall of 2016.

This October 7-10, Veterans For Peace members will converge in Nogales, Arizona for SOAW's first bi-national convergence at the U.S./Mexico border to demand a fundamental shift in U.S. foreign policy.

At a time when refugees who are fleeing U.S.-sponsored violence are being branded as criminals, rapists and terrorists, and as anti-immigrant rhetoric continues to poison the public discourse in this election year, it is important for people of conscience to take a stand and to offer a different narrative.

As politicians build walls, we must build bridges.

We need to build grassroots power to challenge the racist status quo and we need to take action. Immigration has been the biggest

issue so far. **I**n the 2016 presidential election campaign, yet every major candidate has remained silent about the connections between militarized U.S. foreign policy and the reasons why people flee here for their lives.

Instead of welcoming refugees as required under international humanitarian standards, they are treated as criminals and imprisoned for profit in the U.S. Moreover, the U.S. "solution" to the so-called child migrant crisis has been to further militarize the borders of Mexico and Central America. Mexico now deports more Central Americans than the U.S. does - with our tax dollars.

Enough is Enough!

The border mobilization in Nogales is one more way to fight for the closure of the School of the Americas, and to work towards a world that is free of suffering and violence. We cannot forget that many of our immigrant brothers and sisters are survivors of U.S.-sponsored atrocities in Latin America. In calling attention to the militarization of the border, we continue to demand an end to state-sponsored terrorism and violence against our communities on both sides of the border.

Join us! Organize your community to join human rights activists, torture survivors, union workers, veterans, community organizers, migrants, faith communities, students and educators from across the Americas.

Get Involved:





**Veterans For Peace
Chapter 56**

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Email: VFP56@aol.com

WE'RE ON THE WEB:

<http://www.vfp56.org>

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FEM: Mashaw McGuinnis

VEOP: Carl Stancil, Jon Reisdorf

VSC: Ernie Behm, John Mulloy

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 turtldncer@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.



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