



VETERANS FOR PEACE
HUMBOLDT BAY
CHAPTER 56

THE FOGHORN

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2011

“Cutting Through the Fog of War”

ROBERT C. KOEHLER

For release 4/7/11

A VORTEX OF DEATH AND WEALTH

By Robert C. Koehler

Whatever the strategic — and humanitarian — considerations behind NATO/U.S. intervention in Libya, a larger force utterly indifferent to both, and seldom sufficiently newsworthy to merit mention, unites tyrant and rescuer and keeps the world tangled in an endless cycle of hellish violence far beyond the scope of the conflict that generates it.

I'm talking about the global arms trade, for which wars large and small, whatever their cause, whatever their “legitimacy,” are necessities without which the goods would not move. They're also more than that, but not the sort of thing we salute or honor with granite statuary.

“This” — the Libyan no fly zone — “is turning into the best shop window for competing aircraft for years. More even than in Iraq in 2003,” said Francis Tusa, editor of the UK-based newsletter Defense Analysis, quoted in a recent Reuters article by Tim Hopher. For instance, enforcement of the no fly zone pitted two European-made jet fighters, the Typhoon and the Rafale, against one another for world leaders to view, and France, Tusa pointed out, “is particularly desperate to sell the Rafale.”

This is the generally unstated truth about Western intervention in the Middle East and anywhere else in the world. The headline-generating acts of murderous repression by dictators, whether we love or abhor them, are made possible by weaponry and equipment they purchased from us. And then, when the time comes, we may have to attack our former business partners with the same weaponry we sold them.

“When it comes to Libya,” Hopher wrote, “Paris was almost as eager to take on Gaddafi as it was to open up military ties after the EU lifted an arms embargo on the country in 2004. But France was not alone in wooing the country after Gaddafi renounced weapons of mass destruction.”

Every country with an armaments industry, including, of course, the United States, which claims 30 percent of the world market in arms sales, wooed Gaddafi when his pariah status was lifted seven years ago. One of the diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks, from December 2009, mentioned an offer to Gaddafi's younger son Khamis to “travel around the United States to tour U.S. military installations,” according to the Reuters article.

And Libya is small potatoes compared to — no surprise — Saudi Arabia. Last year, according to Spiegel Online, the U.S. announced the largest arms export deal in history with the Saudis. The oil-rich kingdom will buy \$60 billion worth of U.S. aircraft over the next five to ten years. “Money is no object,” the article informs us, “and the Saudi air force is to receive F-15 fighter-bombers, Apache attack helicopters, missiles, radar equipment and bombs. All together, according to the Wall Street Journal, the order is large enough to guarantee 77,000 jobs at Boeing.”

An economic gusher of such magnitude overwhelms what we usually think of as politics, let alone what we think of as morality or humanity. The stakes are too high for geopolitics to be, at its core, about anything but armaments, unrest and war, over and over in a vortex of death and wealth. This is not just an American problem but a global one. If the United States gets all human-rightsy about a particular country and refuses to sell weapons to it, someone else will. The solution to this is beyond the scope of the nation-state or any transnational institution that currently exists, which are all based on the eternal inevitability of war. And the most important war is always the next one.

According to Tom Gjelten, who reported on the arms trade last month for NPR, there's a certain bizarre security in all this: “The risk that

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countries receiving American arms might someday turn them against the United States is somewhat mitigated by their continued dependence on U.S. firms for spare parts.”

Gjeltten went on to say, in a tone of macabre amorality that is characteristic of so much geopolitical reporting: “Defense contractors, however, now have to worry about reduced demand for their products, if the United States pulls back on arms transfers to the Middle East or if Middle Eastern governments choose to spend less money on U.S. weaponry and more on social programs, in order to calm their restive populations.”

This is always the sticking point for me, the last straw of outrage — the arrogant pseudo-objectivity of war reportage. The business worries of defense contractors are neatly and deftly turned into the worries of everyman, but meanwhile, the monstrous absurdity of the whole system, which has just been laid bare, hovers without mention.

And suddenly I thought about Harry Lime, Graham Greene’s memorable villain in the 1949 movie *The Third Man*, played by Orson Welles. Riding above the mass of humanity in a Vienna Ferris wheel, he says to his friend, who has just asked if he ever thinks about his victims:

“Victims? Don’t be melodramatic. Look down there. Tell me. Would you really feel any pity if one of those dots stopped moving forever? If I offered you twenty thousand pounds for every dot that stopped, would you really, old man, tell me to keep my money, or would you calculate how many dots you could afford to spare? Free of income tax, old man. Free of income tax — the only way you can save money nowadays.”

Robert Koehler is an award-winning, Chicago-based journalist, contributor to *One World, Many Peaces* and nationally syndicated writer. His new book, *Courage Grows Strong at the Wound* (Xenos Press) is now available. Contact him at koehlercw@gmail.com or visit his website at commonwonders.com.

Submitted by Peter Aronson

PTSD , Veterans and Acupuncture

By Jeffery Halloff

“PTSD, Veterans and Acupuncture” by Jeffery Halloff , Licensed Acupuncturist and co-founder of Humboldt Veterans Acupuncture Project

As we learn about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we often read a lot of statistics. The human cost and incalculable suffering becomes translated to over \$1 trillion spent on the wars by the U.S., over 5000 Americans dead and 30,000 maimed (not to mention innumerable

Iraqis and Afghanis.) Another statistic to which we are obligated to pay attention, is the rapidly rising number of service members and veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

A Rand Corporation study completed in 2008 found that 20% of military service members returning from Afghanistan and Iraq have reported symptoms of PTSD or major depression. That was roughly 300,000 people, and that number continues to rise according to figures from Veterans for Common Sense (VCS). The Rand study also determined that many service members do not seek help, as they fear it will stigmatize them and harm their careers. And among those who do ask for help, it was determined that about half do not receive “minimally adequate” care to alleviate their suffering.

The symptoms of PTSD begin after experience of physical or psychological trauma, and often a combination of the two. It is a chronic disorder, and can last months, and often years. PTSD is classified as an anxiety disorder, characterized by subjective re-experiencing of trauma, avoidance of stimuli that are associated with trauma, and decreased involvement in life’s activities. Anxiety, anger, insomnia, nightmares, hopelessness, depression, inability to concentrate, hyper-vigilance and panic attacks can be commonly experienced.

The persistent symptoms can cause impairment of one’s participation in social relations, inability to maintain employment, and damage to one’s ability to function in society. The term, “PTSD”, was coined in the 1970’s, but PTSD-like symptoms have been recognized in combat veterans for ages. Shell-shock, battle fatigue, and traumatic war neuroses are some terms that have been used, as this problem has been identified since at least the Civil War, and likely as far back as ancient Greece. The term, “Post-Vietnam Syndrome” was coined by the group, Vietnam Veterans Against the War, realizing that veterans were having readjustment problems. Post-Vietnam Syndrome then came to be recognized as and labeled Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. A 1983 National Veterans Readjustment Study, mandated by Congress, found that 15% of Vietnam veterans showed signs of PTSD.

Between 2001 and 2009, the US Department of Veterans Affairs reports that 1 million troops left active duty and became eligible for VA services. Nearly 50% sought treatment for a disability, ailment or disorder, and nearly half of those were diagnosed with a mental health problem. This is a rate of approximately 25% of returning troops with some manifestation of PTSD, and these numbers may likely be higher, as many do not ask for help.

Multiple deployments, and the rising number of Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) are also factors that drive up the rates of PTSD. Untreated symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress may lead to suicidal thoughts and action, and we know that suicide rates for veterans and active service members are at appallingly high levels. The army’s suicide rate doubled between 2001 and 2006.

In 2003, 77 active-duty soldiers killed themselves, 140 in 2008,

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and 160 in 2009. Data for veterans is at least as troubling, as the Veterans Affairs Department reports that there are approximately 950 suicide attempts each month by veterans in the care of the VA.

18 veterans commit suicide each day, 5 of which are in VA care. Military suicides account for 20% of all suicides, but veterans only make up 7.6% of the population. Obviously, these are big problems. As an acupuncturist, I can also sincerely say that we have a solution. Acupuncture has been found, in scientific studies, to ease the symptoms of post-traumatic stress, at least as well as cognitive behavioral therapy.

In veterans acupuncture clinics around the country, including Humboldt, vets report experiencing a greater sense of well-being, reduced insomnia and less anxiety after acupuncture treatments.

We have started the Humboldt Veterans Acupuncture Project (HVAP) to try to alleviate some of that statistical and personal nightmare mentioned above. We are affiliated with Acupuncturists Without Borders (AWB) and their nationwide Military Stress Recovery Project. We give free acupuncture to vets, active-duty service members, and their families. (We do accept donations.) The beauty of acupuncture is that it is a simple, low cost modality that offers immediate, effective and easily accessible treatment for large numbers of people. The treatments are based on the National Acupuncture Detox Association (NADA) ear protocol, which has been proven to be powerful in relieving symptoms of stress and trauma.

During treatment, people sit fully clothed in a circle of chairs, and the licensed acupuncturist places 5 tiny needles in each ear. The recipients then usually close their eyes and rest for approximately 30 minutes as the acupuncture does its work. The potential of this program is enormous. History has shown that the long-term impact of war takes a tremendous toll for decades. By providing free acupuncture treatments to veterans currently returning from war, we can play a part in preventing history from repeating itself, and by providing treatments to veterans from past wars and conflicts, we can take part in helping mend the psychological wounds of the past. Also, acupuncture is a tool that can work harmoniously with other more conventional treatment modalities such as counseling and medication.

A Marine, part of a Wounded Warriors unit, having returned from multiple hazardous deployments in Iraq, was asked to describe his first acupuncture treatment. "After she stuck me (needled me), I went back out to my truck, and I just sat there, for about an hour and a half, just GLOWING (his words)." His eyes moistened briefly as he said, "I realized it was the first time I had felt happy in two and a half years," he volunteered, continuing, "I had forgotten what it was like to feel real joy." Acupuncture works by balancing your energy, vitalizing your essential energy that exists within, since pre-trauma. We heal from the inside.

Acupuncturists have recently been employed by the military to treat PTSD, and pain. Studies, such as by the Rand Corp., have

shown that PTSD, at current rates, will cost society \$6.2 billion. The military is also concerned with lost productivity and getting suffering soldiers to return to active duty. At Humboldt Veterans Acupuncture Project, we are more concerned with each individual within our community. And if we can help give a sense of well-being, a "glowing joy", as described above, wonderful, we can create peace, one ear, and one tiny needle at a time.

Humboldt Veterans Acupuncture Project offers free treatments before each Veterans For Peace meeting at 6PM, 1st Thursday of each month at 550 Union, Arcata. We hope to expand this service with more venues in the future. Ask your VA doctor to recommend acupuncture on a fee basis for chronic pain, PTSD, and other problems. Call Jeffrey Haloff at 268-8007 or Jessica Baker at 822-4300 with questions.

Jeffery Haloff is a licensed acupuncturist and co-founder of Humboldt Veterans Acupuncture Project.

My Father the Soldier, my Son the Soldier

By Lisa Graff

I know nothing about war itself, but my mother's explanations about my father's military service during World War II have remained with me. She claimed that Dad got addicted to morphine when he was in the hospital in Europe. My father never really survived the war, she said, even though he came home in 1945 and together they raised six children.

Tom Hanks was interviewed in late 2009 about the World War II Museum in New Orleans, and my mind raced when I heard him say

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**Next VFP56 meeting will be held
on Thursday, May 5th
at 7:00 PM.
Meeting will be held in the Commons Room at 550 Union Street in Arcata.
Veterans and non-veterans are more than welcome to come and help us dialogue about what we together can do to bring about peace in this complex world.**



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it was amazing how those men put their lives on the line for their country ... and then just went back home and put up Christmas trees.

Every Christmas my father went alone to pick out a tree on a lot run by the local scout troop. Once he took me along. His breath smelled of bourbon and cigarettes. He seemed cheerful when he drove, not his usual angry self. I remember the smell of that tree lot and that the scoutmaster gave me lollipops to share with my sisters. That Christmas we pooled our money to buy our father the perfect gift: a shiny red ashtray and a bottle of Southern Comfort, a brand that he liked but that cost more than Jim Beam.

As an adult, I grasp the inappropriateness of this gesture. Growing up with an alcoholic, it becomes normal to give someone you love the thing that makes him happiest. My father would fill his glass with ice and bourbon and watch war movies late into the night. My mother talked to me about his nightmares and night sweats, but my father never once mentioned the war to me or my sisters. He died in November 1981, the day before Veterans Day, at 56 — the same age I am now. The doctor said he had a fifth of his liver left. His uniform hangs in my closet, and his Purple Heart and various pins are in my desk.

In 2007, my son joined the Army at age 21. My father never graduated from high school; he joined the Army so he could make a living. I could afford for my son to finish college, but he chose not to, despite my pleas. I told my son about the grandfather he never knew and about my classmates who didn't come home from Vietnam; how I was tear-gassed at a D.C. rally when I was 19, embroidered peace signs on my jeans and hated Nixon for not bringing the troops home.

I wonder what advice my father would have given my son. If my father told him the truth about the horrors of war, would my son have listened? Would my father have said that any war was worth fighting?

I wept. And I am ashamed that I did not tell my son that I was proud of him that day because I was frightened for his future and, selfishly, for mine.

When my son completed boot camp, my husband and I were there to support him. There were so many young faces in uniform. All of us were searching the crowd for the glimpse of the one that was ours. My God, was I proud of him that day, and I did tell him. But I also noticed that so many of the graduating soldiers were only 19, 20, 21 or 22 and that many already had wives and a child or two to support.

There is a corner in my neighborhood where on many weekends two groups of Americans gather on opposite sides of the intersection. On the corner closest to me are signs that say things like

“Support our troops” and “Honk if you support us.” They wave the American flag at passing cars.

On the opposite corner are protesters with banners saying “Send our troops home.” They wave the same red, white and blue flags. They say they love the same country.

As my son prepares for officer training this year, I feel torn: Can I stand in the middle of the street? I want to support the troops. I support my son. I did not support the invasion of Iraq and do not believe we will “win” in Afghanistan. Is there now a possibility that he could be sent to Libya? What I learned from my father and several presidents was a healthy disbelief in the idea that our government will do what is right. I would like to trust the generals and the president to know what is best for our nation and national security, but I am afraid that too many young people have died in vain. Maybe I am the coward.

Maybe I take my freedom for granted. If my son is killed or wounded in battle, I want proof that he died for the freedoms of protesters on both sides of the street. I pray that if he comes home wounded, inside or out, the military will support him psychologically so he can learn to live in a place that is not at war. I'd like for him to take pleasure in putting up a Christmas tree. I hope he can talk about it, because I would listen to every word and try to learn something.

Lisa Graff is a writer in Delaware.

The F-35: A Weapon That Costs More Than Australia

MAR 15 2011, 8:45 AM ET428

The U.S. will ultimately spend \$1 trillion for these fighter planes. Where's the outrage over Washington's culture of waste?

The Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II is an impressive aircraft: a fifth generation multi role fighter plane with stealth technology. It's also a symbol of everything that's wrong with defense spending in America.

In a rational world, U.S. military expenditure would focus on the likely threats that the United States faces today and in the future. And at a time of mounting national debt, the Tea Party would be knocking down the Pentagon's door to cut waste.

But the only tea party in sight is the one overseen by the Mad Hatter, as we head down the rabbit hole into the military industrial wonderland.

The F-35 is designed to be the core tactical fighter aircraft for the U.S. military, with three versions for the Air Force, Navy, and the Marine Corps. Each plane clocks in at around \$90 million.

In a decade's time, the United States plans to have 15 times as
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many modern fighters as China, and 20 times as many as Russia.

So, how many F-35s do we need? 100? 500?

Washington intends to buy 2,443, at a price tag of \$382 billion.

Add in the \$650 billion that the Government Accountability Office estimates is needed to operate and maintain the aircraft, and the total cost reaches a staggering \$1 trillion.

In other words, we're spending more on this plane than Australia's entire GDP (\$924 billion).

The F-35 is the most expensive defense program in history, and reveals massive cost overruns, a lack of clear strategic thought, and a culture in Washington that encourages incredible waste.

Money is pouring into the F-35 vortex. In 2010, Pentagon officials found that the cost of each plane had soared by over 50 percent above the original projections. The program has fallen years behind schedule, causing billions of dollars of additional expense, and won't be ready until 2016. An internal Pentagon report concluded that: "affordability is no longer embraced as a core pillar."

In January 2011, even Defense Secretary Robert Gates, a champion of the aircraft, voiced his frustration: "The culture of endless money that has taken hold must be replaced by a culture of restraint."

The F-35 is meant to be the future of U.S. tactical air power, but the program harks back to the Cold War, when we faced an aggressive great power rival.

The world has changed. The odds of great power war have declined dramatically. We still need a deterrent capacity against China and Russia, but how much is enough? In a decade's time, the United States plans to have 15 times as many modern fighters as China, and 20 times as many as Russia.

Meanwhile, new challenges and threats have emerged. We should be focusing our military spending on the types of campaigns that we're actually likely to face: complex asymmetric wars against weaker opponents, where manpower and intelligence are critical.

And it's hard to square the military largesse with our rampant debt. Republicans want to slash billions from programs like early education, in Representative Jeb Hensarling's words, to "save our children from bankruptcy."

So where is the outrage at the F-35's outlandish cost?

Some just don't seem to care. When it comes to defense, Republicans are the champions of big government and massive expenditure. The F-35 is too big to fail.

At the same time, many Democrats keep quiet for fear of looking

weak on defense--unless, like Senator Bernie Sanders, they're from Vermont.

Other politicians are bought off with pork. Defense suppliers are spread throughout dozens of states, giving everyone a reason to look the other way.

Any serious effort to balance the federal budget will require significant cuts in defense spending. And the F-35 is a prime target.

The 2010 bipartisan Bowles-Simpson Commission on deficit reduction suggested canceling the Marine Corps's version of the F-35, and halving the number of F-35s for the Air Force and Navy--replacing them with current generation F-16s, which cost one-third as much. This would save close to \$30 billion from 2011 to 2015.

The plan went nowhere.

We used to be content to outspend Australia on aircraft. Now we literally spend Australia on aircraft.

Submitted by Nate Lomba

BRADLEY MANNING MOVED

Amnesty International

WASHINGTON (AFP) – Bradley Manning, a US soldier held for allegedly passing classified documents to WikiLeaks, is being transferred to a new prison facility after intense criticism of the conditions of his detention.

The Pentagon on Tuesday announced his imminent transfer to a Kansas military facility it said was better-suited for a long-term stay, while denying that the move was in response to criticism of his treatment in Quantico, Virginia.

"We have decided that the new joint correctional facility at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, is the most appropriate facility for Private Manning," Jeh Johnson, the general counsel of the Department of Defense, said Tuesday.

The 23-year-old Welsh-born US army intelligence officer, who allegedly provided the whistleblowing website WikiLeaks with a trove of secret military and diplomatic documents, has been imprisoned at Quantico since July 2010.

Manning's detention conditions, which have included solitary confinement and being forced to sleep naked, have drawn the attention of Amnesty International, the American Civil Liberties Union and the British government.

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In February Amnesty called Manning's detention "harsh and punitive" and urged Britain to intervene on his behalf.

And last month State Department spokesman Philip Crowley stepped down after being quoted as saying that Manning's treatment was "ridiculous and counterproductive and stupid."

Johnson initially insisted the move to Leavenworth had nothing to do with those complaints. "We remain satisfied that Private Manning's pretrial confinement at Quantico was in compliance with legal and regulatory standards in all respects," he told reporters.

After questioning, however, Johnson said: "I won't say that his conditions at Quantico had nothing to do with this," before arguing that the Kansas facility was more appropriate for long-term stays.

"Quantico is a place where pre-trial confinees reside for one month, two months, three months. It is rare if not unprecedented that somebody is there for as long as nine or 10 months," he said.

Manning will be allowed visitors and, instead of being kept in solitary confinement for 23 hours a day, will be able to interact with other pre-trial detainees, officials said.

Lieutenant Colonel Dawn Hilton, the commander of the Kansas prison, said it was designed for long-term incarceration, unlike the facility at Quantico, and housed around 150 inmates, including eight in the pretrial phase.

"I have the capacity to hold not only the pretrial prisoners, but post-trial prisoners sentenced up to five years," Hilton said. "And with that comes all the support staff that Private First Class Manning may need."

"He'll receive open recreational time for three hours during the day, both indoors and outdoors, and he'll have the capability to interact with other pretrial inmates on a routine basis."

Johnson said the facility would be able to support Manning during the pre-trial and trial period, which could last months or even years.

He described the facility, which was opened in October, as a "state-of-the-art complex with the best and widest range of support services available to pretrial prisoners," including medical and mental health staff.

The leak of hundreds of thousands of documents, many related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, infuriated top US officials, who insisted their publication was a threat to national security.

Submitted by Jim Sorter

COME TO YOUR SENSES AND MANAGE YOUR MOOD

*By Dave Berman
4/21/11*

Last year I became a Certified Practitioner of Neuro-Linguistic Programming. NLP is a model of communicating using the senses to influence how the brain stores and accesses information responsible for feelings and behavior.

Created in the 1970's, NLP is best known for providing rapid relief from phobias, anxiety, trauma, PTSD, addictions, allergies and generally aligning behavior with conscious intention. Based on the idea of modeling (if one person can learn to do something, anyone can learn to do it), NLP is also used to improve abilities to learn and strategize, make decisions, be persuasive, and cultivate excellence in any field.

VFP members are invited to a pair of Intro to NLP workshops coming up in early May:

* • **"Manage Your Mood"** – Monday May 2, 7-8pm at the Isis Osiris Healing Temple in the Sunny Brae shopping center. This fun class focuses on techniques to feel good anytime. Suggested donation is \$3-5.

* • **"Come To Your Senses"** – Tuesday May 10, 7-8pm at Moonrise Herbs on the Arcata Plaza. This interactive workshop will demonstrate how NLP can quickly eliminate anxiety, trauma, phobias, unwanted habits and more. \$5.00 advance registration recommended at Moonrise Herbs. \$7.00 at the door, space permitting.

My NLP coaching practice uses the business name Manifest Positivity, which you may remember from earlier work I did under that name to promote VFP and other public service organizations and projects. Those videos and articles are still found in the Archives section of my website, along with more recent articles I've written about NLP (one of which appears in the April/May Isis Scrolls).

To learn more visit www.ManifestPositivity.com or call me for a private appointment in my Arcata office – 707-845-3749.

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Namaste, Dave Berman
Life Coach and Certified Practitioner of NLP
www.ManifestPositivity.com, 707-845-3749

Everyone reading this issue of the Foghorn must endeavor to view the site (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QoLhLv5NGC4>). If this does not get you to thinking of our losses and want to do something about them, then???????? PLEASE PASS IT ON TO A FRIEND!

Rich G.



OBAMA DECLARES MANNING GUILTY BEFORE TRIAL CAN MILITARY OFFICERS JUDGE HIM IMPARTIALLY AND CONTRADICT THEIR COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF?

By Elliott Adams

President Barack Obama said on April 21 that PFC Bradley Manning “broke the law.” (<http://youtube/IfmtUpd4id0> at 0:47 mark) This statement casts serious doubt on whether Manning can receive a fair trial from officers subordinate to Obama, their Commander-in-Chief.

“Members of the military are trained to follow orders. President Obama is the commander of all armed forces,” said Elliott Adams, president of Veterans For Peace. “Any officer who wants to advance in his military career would be wise not to contradict their commander-in-chief, especially after the military’s brutal treatment of Manning this past year. The President seems to have forgotten what he taught his constitutional law classes about being innocent until proven guilty.”

The government has already violated Bradley Manning’s due process rights by keeping him in pretrial solitary confinement for nearly a year and the President bears ultimate responsibility for the abusive treatment Manning has endured since July 2010 at Quantico Marine Base, and possibly before that in Kuwait. He has been confined to a 6-by-12-foot cell for 23 hours a day, prevented from sleeping during the day, denied exercise, woken up constantly, given limited access to books and writing materials, stripped at night and forced to endure inspection naked, and deprived of his eyeglasses. Many mental health professionals characterize this as psychological torture. President Obama could have stopped this mistreatment at any time with one phone call.

The President made another critical misstatement in his comments. He claimed that Daniel Ellsberg, who leaked the Pentagon Papers, was less culpable because the documents he leaked were “not classified in the same way.” In fact, the Pentagon Papers were classified at the highest level of secrecy while the WikiLeaks documents were at the lowest level.

“It’s time to free Bradley Manning and pin a medal on the man,” said Leah Bolger, VFP vice-president. “He has already been punished beyond constitutional limits and now President Obama has made a fair trial impossible. If indeed he’s the one who released those documents, he is a hero for blowing the whistle on war crimes and other misbehavior by U.S. officials.”

threats and have therefore raised their security level from “Miffed” to “Peeved.” Soon, though, security levels may be raised yet again to “Irritated” or even “A Bit Cross.”

The English have not been “A Bit Cross” since the blitz in 1940 when tea supplies nearly ran out. Terrorists have been re-categorized from “Tiresome” to “A Bloody Nuisance.” The last time the British issued a “Bloody Nuisance” warning level was in 1588, when threatened by the Spanish Armada.

The Scots have raised their threat level from “Pissed Off” to “Let’s get the Bastards.” They don’t have any other levels. This is the reason they have been used on the front line of the British army for the last 300 years.

The French government announced yesterday that it has raised its terror alert level from “Run” to “Hide.” The only two higher levels in France are “Collaborate” and “Surrender.” The rise was precipitated by a recent fire that destroyed France’s white flag factory, effectively paralyzing the country’s military capability.

Italy has increased the alert level from “Shout Loudly and Excitedly” to “Elaborate Military Posturing.” Two more levels remain: “Ineffective Combat Operations” and “Change Sides.”

The Germans have increased their alert state from “Disdainful Arrogance” to “Dress in Uniform and Sing Marching Songs.” They also have two higher levels: “Invade a Neighbor” and “Lose.”

Belgians, on the other hand, are all on holiday as usual; the only threat they are worried about is NATO pulling out of Brussels.

The Spanish are all excited to see their new submarines ready to deploy. These beautifully designed subs have glass bottoms so the new Spanish navy can get a really good look at the old Spanish navy.

Australia, meanwhile, has raised its security level from “No worries” to “She’ll be alright, Mate.” Two more escalation levels remain: “Crikey! I think we’ll need to cancel the barbie this weekend!” and “The barbie is canceled.” So far no situation has ever warranted use of the final escalation level.

(A bit of humor can go a long ways to lift our spirits. Enjoy!)

Submitted by Don Swall

VFP 2011 ANNUAL CONVENTION
Resilience, Resistance, & Nonviolent Revolution
Portland State University
Portland Oregon
August 3-7, 2011
BE THERE

INTERNATIONAL ALERTS TO TERROR THREATS IN 2011

By John Cleese - British writer, actor and tall person

The English are feeling the pinch in relation to recent terrorist





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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 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.

2nd Annual Peace Poetry Celebration

**Who: Peace Poetry Contest entrants (high school students).
What: Reading of Peace Poems by the poet's and award presentations.**

When: Friday, May 6, 2011, at 7 p.m.

Where: Unitarian Universalist's Fellowship Hall, 23 Fellowship Way, Bayside, California (a short distance along Jacoby Creek Road beyond the Bayside Grange)

This year there will be an award for "Best Presentation." Judging will be by faculty of Dell'Arte International.

Volunteers are needed to provide munchies and beverages, and coordinate and staff the refreshments table. If you are willing to help please contact: Carl Stancil at 616-6405 (carlstancil@gmail.com); Jon Reisdorf at 822-4595 (jonreisdorf@hotmail.com); or 'Nate' Lomba at 269-0528 (nslomba@reninet.com).

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