



THE FOGHORN NEWS

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

MAY 2020

The Coronation

by Charles Eisenstein

COVID-19 is showing us that when humanity is united in common cause, phenomenally rapid change is possible. None of the world's problems are technically difficult to solve; they originate in human disagreement. In coherency, humanity's creative powers are boundless. A few months ago, a proposal to halt commercial air travel would have seemed preposterous. Likewise for the radical changes we are making in our social behavior, economy, and the role of government in our lives. COVID demonstrates the power of our collective will when we agree on what is important. What else might we achieve, in coherency? What do we want to achieve, and what world shall we create? That is always the next question when anyone awakens to their power.

COVID-19 is like a rehab

See page 7: "Coronation"

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Photo: General Timothy Ray speaks during a ceremony at Duke Field, near Fort Walton Beach, Florida, December 19, 2019, marking the arrival of the Air Force's newest helicopter, the MH-139A Grey Wolf, built by Boeing. Fifty-one members of Congress and their spouses own between \$2.3 and \$5.8 million worth of stock in Boeing and other major defense contractors.

The Members of Congress Who Profit From War

by David Moore and Donald Shaw

It was shortly after midnight in Baghdad on Friday, Jan. 3, when a missile strike ordered by President Trump killed Iranian General Qassem Soleimani.

When stock markets

opened the next day, dozens of members of Congress saw bumps in their portfolios as their holdings in defense contractors like Lockheed Martin and Raytheon increased in value on the possibility of war. Over the next three trading days, the leading defense industry stock index would surge 2.4% above Thursday's close.

Among these members of Congress with personal

See page 6: "War Profiteers"

Call for Global Ceasefire During Pandemic

by Consortium News

The UN Secretary-General [called on March 23] for a ceasefire in all the world's wars as the globe fights the COVID-19 pandemic.

Missing among the nations supporting a global

ceasefire in the more than 40 wars being fought around the world are [three] of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council...China, Russia and the United States—who are among the world's largest arms traders. All possess a nuclear weapons arsenal. [Only UK and] France among the P5 [are] for the ceasefire.

Whose Blood, Whose Hands?

by S. Brian Willson

"Qassem Soleimani had the blood of Americans on his hands," so said U.S. Representative Eliot Engel, Chair of the House Committee on Foreign Relations. A similar accusation was made by many other politicians and commentators. But these blood-drenched politicians and commentators only know what the extremely biased anti-Russian and anti-Iranian U.S. intelligence reports say, which are predictably unreliable. They have no idea of Soleimani's history—many observers credit him as the chief strategist in defeating ISIS. And the most important question of all is ignored: Why are unwanted U.S. military present in other countries? They are there illegally, a blatantly imperial menace. Why is

See page 4: "Whose Blood?"

This statement by [over 70] nations listed supports an end to hostilities to help prevent the further spread of the pandemic, "the true fight of our lives," according to Secretary-General António Guterres.

War, it seems, is the only part of "normal" life that continues.

See page 2: "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

Ceasefire: (From page 1)

[Note: The Consortium News article above was edited to reflect the additional ceasefire members.]

Following is UN Secretary-General António Guterres' appeal for a global ceasefire amid the COVID-19 pandemic, issued 23 March in New York:

Our world faces a common enemy: COVID-19. The virus does not care about nationality or ethnicity, faction or faith. It attacks all, relentlessly.

Meanwhile, armed conflict rages on around the world. The most vulnerable—women and children, people with disabilities, the marginalized and the displaced—pay the highest price. They are also at the highest risk of suffering devastating losses

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. ■



from COVID-19.

Let's not forget that in war-ravaged countries, health systems have collapsed. Health professionals, already few in number, have often been targeted. Refugees and others displaced by violent conflict are doubly vulnerable.

The fury of the virus illustrates the folly of war.

That is why today, I am calling for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world. It is time to put armed conflict on lockdown and focus together on the true fight of our lives.

To warring parties, I say: Pull back from hostilities. Put aside mistrust and animosity. Silence the guns,

stop the artillery, end the airstrikes.

This is crucial—to help create corridors for life-saving aid. To open precious windows for diplomacy. To bring hope to places among the most vulnerable to COVID-19.

Let us take inspiration from coalitions and dialogue slowly taking shape among rival parties to enable joint approaches to COVID-19. But we need much more.

End the sickness of war and fight the disease that is ravaging our world. It starts by stopping the fighting everywhere.

Now.

That is what our human family needs, now more than ever. ■





VFP Golden Rule Sail Boat Project

The Golden Rule crew spreads the word about the continuing dangers of nuclear power, and the poisoning of the air, water and soil from the entire nuclear cycle, from uranium mining to the disposal of nuclear waste.

We aim to advance Veterans For Peace opposition to nuclear weapons and war, and to do so in a dramatic fashion. We have recovered and restored the original peace boat, the *Golden Rule*, that set sail in 1958 to stop nuclear testing in the atmosphere, and which inspired many peace makers and peace ships that followed.

Goal Reached for Voyage to Japan

Supporters like you have been very generous. In the last two months, we reached our \$30,000 goal for the voyage to Japan. But we will need funds to cover docking in Hawaii until November, so any help is always welcome.

Golden Rule's Voyage Delayed by Coronavirus!

As the Golden Rule crew worked hard here in Honolulu, preparing for our upcoming Pacific voyage, the coronavirus has spread around the world, including here in Hawaii. The coronavirus pandemic and related restrictions are affecting all of the Pacific Islands we are planning to visit. Therefore the Golden Rule Committee and Veterans For Peace have decided to delay the Golden Rule's voyage to the Marshall Islands, Guam, Okinawa and Japan. We had planned to depart from Hawaii by April 1. Instead, we are now hoping to begin the voyage in November or December. Thank you for the concern that many of you have expressed about the health and safety of the crew! We have been living and working together closely every day, but otherwise trying to limit our social contacts. We have cancelled our remaining events here in Hawaii. We are all healthy at this time.



For the past two weeks, Helen Jaccard, Captain-Milosz Kaczorowski and crew members Zoe Byrd, Gerry Condon, Keith Oney and Jakub Dobrosielski have been working very hard in Honolulu, preparing for our much anticipated Pacific voyage...We hope to be on our way before the end of the year...Sailing for a Nuclear—Free World and a Peaceful, Sustainable Future! ■

Helen Jaccard, VFP Golden Rule Project Manager; **Gerry Condon**, President, Golden Rule Committee.

To read the full update, or to learn more, go to www.vfpgoldenrule.org

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.

VFP Chapter 56 members stand silently for an hour-long Peace Vigil every Friday from 5 to 6pm on the southwest corner of the Arcata Plaza (8th & H Streets) and in front of the Humboldt County Courthouse (5th & I Streets) in Eureka.

For [the national VFP Newsletter](http://the.national.vfp.newsletter) go to veteransforpeace.org

Whose Blood?: (From page 1)

Congress funding this policy that in fact threatens the people of the U.S., rather than protecting them?

Of course, these mostly White men hypocritically ignore gruesome history, including militarily supporting Iraq's Saddam Hussein with chemical weapons in his 8-year war against Iran that took one million of their lives. Or, the totally concocted, grotesquely illegal and criminal U.S. war against Iraq, 1990-1991, and 2003-present, killing over a million lives. Since the blood is not streaming out of their bodies, they callously ignore the blood of Iranians, Iraqis, Afghanis, Syrians, Yemenis, Libyans, Somalis, Venezuelans, Nicaraguans, Salvadorans, Hondurans, Bolivians, Sudanese, Pakistanis, Nigerians, Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, and citizens of many other countries, that is in fact on *their* hands, and on the hands of countless U.S. Generals, Colonels, Majors, Captains, Lieutenants, and their Navy and Marine counterparts, and common soldiers and sailors under the direction of these officers, the President Commander-in-Chief, and all their funders in the bipartisan U.S. Congress comprised of 535 (s)elected representatives, such as Mr. Engel, and the hands of millions of taxpayers.

How many U.S. citizens know of the crimes our country systematically has committed, and continues to commit, throughout the world, crimes that are constant, remorseless, and fully documented? British playwright and Nobel

Prize recipient Harold Pinter sadly commented: "Nobody talks about them. . . . It never happened. Nothing ever happened. Even while it was happening it wasn't happening. It didn't matter. It was of no interest".^[1] Without historical context, there is little capacity to critique the veracity of contemporary policies and rhetoric. So, it is believed, the U.S. just couldn't be involved in patterns of criminal interventions; our origins just couldn't be built on dispossession and genocide. "That is not the American way." But the fact is that it *is* the American way. We simply don't know about it and don't want to know about it. Im-

punity has erased memory.

We would all be enlightened to re-read Barbara Tuchman's classic, *The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam*, where she clearly articulates the horrific patterns of war folly that have played out around the globe for millennia.^[2] Only now it would be from Troy to Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan.

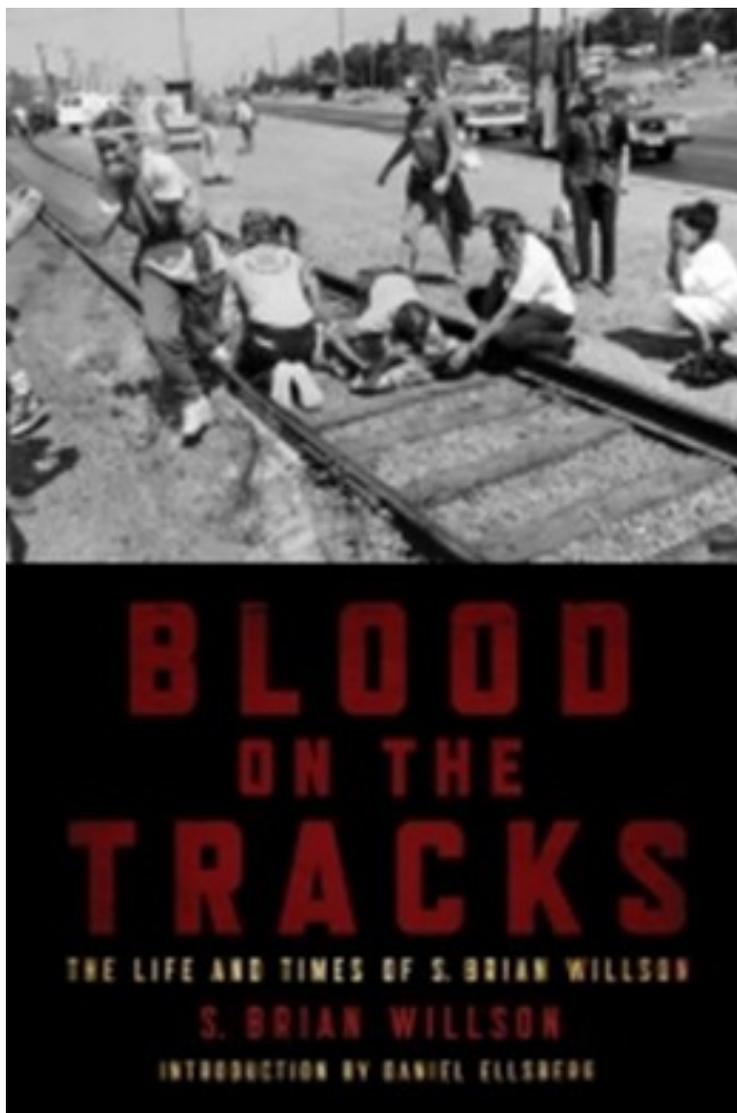
Impunity

Cultural historians, philosophers, psychologists, essayists, and scientists caution us to seriously understand the past and its patterns. Sigmund Freud declared that in psychic life, nothing of what has been formed in the past

ever disappears. Everything that has occurred is preserved in one way or another and, in fact, reappears under either favorable or unfavorable circumstances.

When impunity dominates, memory disappears and justice as a permanent value in human history ceases to exist. Sickness in the soul—of the individual, as well as of a nation—results where nothing is real. Everything becomes pretend, lies told over and over in many different forms throughout time.^[3]

Impunity in fact produces severe disturbances within the individual and collective psyche, manifesting in behavioral psychopathologies of huge magnitude, such as wars. Think of a spoiled child who has never been taught boundaries or been held to account for harmful behavior. Collective as well as individual narcissism can lead to extreme antisocial conduct. Security is experienced through individuality, attracted to authoritarianism, but not social justice. An acquisitive habit settles into the inner life, preempting an authentic *inquisitive* and socially empathic mind. A social compact is destroyed in deference to privatization, creating *anomie*. Life is commodified. Disparity between the Haves and Have-Nots becomes extreme; today this is called neoliberal economics. History is negated, concealing past traumas such as unspeakable genocides and deceitfully based wars.^[4]



See page 5: "Whose Blood?"

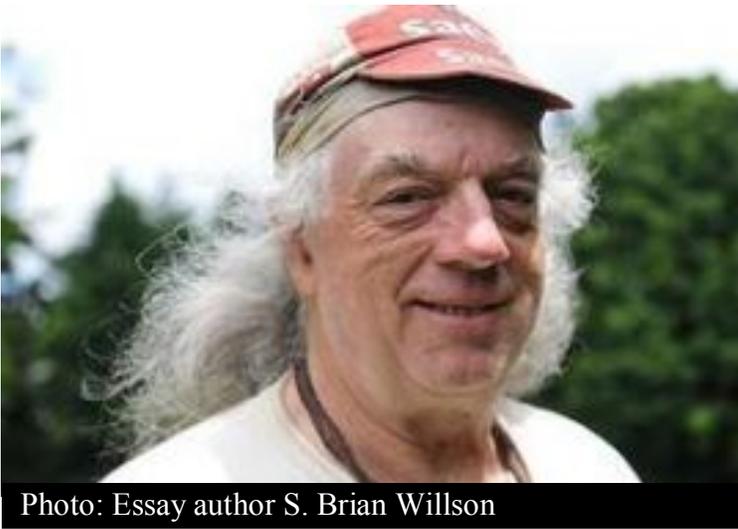


Photo: Essay author S. Brian Willson

[Whose Blood?](#): (From page 4)

The Shame of Forceful Dispossession Hidden by Exceptionalism

The United States of America was founded on two horrific genocides—the forceful dispossession of Indigenous Americans, stealing their land, murdering millions with impunity, and the forceful dispossession of Africans, stealing their labor, murdering millions with impunity. Their blood is still on our hands.

So, we created a kind of “religious” mythology about our country to conceal our painful *shame*. It is called exceptionalism, enabled by impunity. The psychological and cultural conditioning growing up in U.S. America, especially for a Eurocentric White male like myself, is emotionally and intellectually comfortable. But the noble history we have been taught about ourselves is fantastic fakery which continues to serve as a comfortable escape from experiencing and feeling the horrible truth of the collective shame of our unspeakable criminal genocidal origins. Capitalism itself would not have ex-

isted without centuries of egregious colonial plunder of millions of Indigenous Americans, or millions of enslaved Africans. Karma exists in some fashion, or as the saying goes, what goes around comes around.

Exceptional Stupidity

So, not only does the lie of being superior over others enable us to avoid extremely unpleasant thoughts and feelings, but it also discourages asking enlightening questions that delve into who we really are as a people. Why mess with the apparent successful myth of being exceptional?

U.S. policy operates in paranoia with delusions of grandeur. By the early 1980s, with more than a decade of reflection since being in Viet Nam, I sensed that this culture of my birth and upbringing was possessed by an illness of psychotic denial. This feeling of superiority—of being uniquely exceptional—is very dangerous because it leads to a kind of stupor, or dangerous stupidity, uninterested in engaging in truly honest dialogue or discussion. It acts like a mindless, conceited fool. And against stupidity we are defense-

less since reason and diplomacy are confidently ignored. It is much more dangerous than malice. Exceptionalism is deeply conditioned in us.

But thoughtlessness—a suspension of critical thinking—today leads to a Planet-threatening nuclear, arrogant war-making society. Not unintelligent, but stupid. And the power brokers, and many in the population, have a vested interest in *remaining* stupid to protect the comfortable original lie, that requires countless subsequent lies, in turn, to preserve that original lie. We have told ourselves a fairy tale, and it feels good, serving as a successful technique of denial.

Our dangerousness was again evidenced by our latest act of war—targeted drone assassinations at the Baghdad International Airport of Iran’s popular General Qassem Soleimani, and Iraqi military leader Abu Mehdi Muehandis. And until we, the people, are able to literally take the money out of the Military-Congressional-Intelligence-Banking-Wall Street-Drug Complex, and the ability of that wealthy complex to absolutely control with bribery our political process, we are doomed to war, climate catastrophe, and extinction, or near so.

Immediately after the assassination of Soleimani, the stock of major U.S. weapon’s manufacturers surged as investors look forward to additional obscene profits from more war. Trump had it right in his campaign promise to get the U.S. out of the Middle East, but he has forsaken that goal in def-

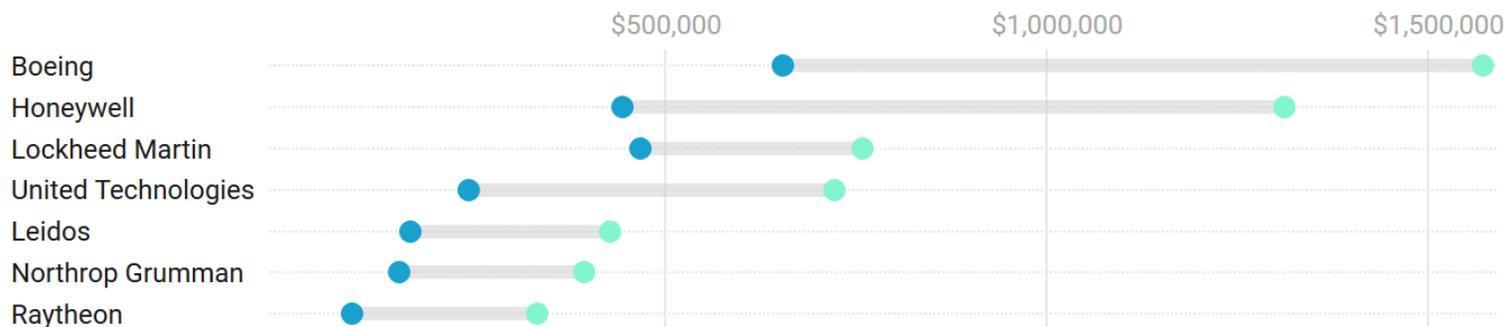
erence to the Neocons and elements of the Deep State, in cahoots with Congress. Ironically, all this military bully posturing, murdering, lying, and disrespect for diplomacy, severely endangers everybody. The Department of Defense (DOD) really should be described as the Department of Offensive War (DOOW).

What is required is a massive, widespread popular rebellion rooted in a global consciousness that tenaciously empowers us to replace our deceitful oligarchy. Why do we continue to allow this insane national misbehavior? Will we escape our stupor, and instead feel, taste, and experience the countless liters of blood on our hands? If so, we might be awakened to the most important of all social emotions—empathy—that enables all humanity to live as one interconnected species, even with different cultures and ethnic backgrounds. It really is our choice, and the stakes could not be higher—survival with dignity. ■

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

Congress' Top Defense Stock Investments

Range of value of members of Congress' combined holdings of stock in top defense contractors



War Profiteers: (From page 1)

investments in the defense industry are several who sit on committees that determine major sources of funding for defense companies and weapons contractors.

According to a Sludge review of financial disclosures, 51 members of Congress and their spouses own between \$2.3 and \$5.8 million worth of stocks in companies that are among the top 30 defense contractors in the world. Members of Congress generally report the values of their investments in ranges, so it's not possible to know exactly how much their stocks are worth. As Congress debates whether to limit President Trump's power to take military action against Iran, the complete list of senators and representatives who own defense stocks is displayed below in this article.

Eighteen members of Congress, combined, own as much as \$760,000 worth of stock of Lockheed Martin, the world's largest defense contractor in terms of overall defense revenues. The value of Lockheed Martin stock surged by [4.3%](#) on the day after Soleimani's assassi-

nation—a day in which the Dow Jones Industrial Average overall traded down.

Four companies—Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, and General Dynamics—make up 90% of arms sales to Saudi Arabia in deals worth over \$125 billion, according to a July 2019 [report](#) by the Center for International Policy. American-made [weapons](#) have been used by Saudi Arabia's government in the war in Yemen, with a [death toll](#) that has risen over 100,000, including 12,000 civilians from attacks targeting them.

Nearly half of the federal discretionary budget goes to defense—\$623 billion in 2018. In his 2020 Pentagon budget request, President Trump proposed increasing that amount to \$750 billion. These annual totals understate total military spending: a May [report](#) from the Center for International Policy found that, counting all ten funding sources for war fighting, the actual total amount spent on defense in 2019 would be \$1.254 trillion, nearly as much as the \$1.359 trillion spent in the entire discretionary budget, including the Departments of Health and Human Services, Educa-

tion, Homeland Security, Energy, and more.

Of the at least 380 former high-ranking Department of Defense officials who went through the revolving door to become lobbyists or senior executives in 2018, around one quarter joined the top 5 defense contractors, according to the [Project On Government Oversight](#): Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon, General Dynamics, and Northrop Grumman. Current U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper is a former lobbyist at Raytheon, which over the past two election cycles [spent](#) \$6.4 million on campaign contributions and \$20 million on federal lobbying.

Methodology

Sludge built a tool that scrapes the House and Senate financial disclosure portals and extracts machine-readable data. Data from financial disclosures that were handwritten and scanned were manually entered by Sludge reporters. The Senate data comes in two sets: one for the most recently filed annual reports, which cover the entire 2018 calendar year, and another for the periodic transaction reports, which log stock purchases or sales within 45

days of the trade. By adding in 2019 purchases and sales with the 2018 annual data, we arrived at finalized totals for senators as of Dec. 13, 2019. The House data does not include periodic transaction reports, so it's possible that House members have sold or bought defense stocks since Dec. 31, 2018 that are not reflected in this article. ■

[Sludge](#) produces investigative journalism on lobbying and money in politics.

[This article](#) was originally published January 31, 2020. [Donald Shaw](#) is a money-in-politics reporter and co-founder of Sludge. [David Moore](#) is also a co-founder of Sludge.

According to graphs accompanying this Sludge article two California members of congress are invested in weapons contractors: Senator Dianne Feinstein, (D) has \$650,000 in Boeing, and Representative Ro Khanna, (D) has \$376,000 in Boeing, Honeywell, Huntington Ingalls, Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Northrop Grumman, and United Technologies.

intervention that breaks the addictive hold of normality. To interrupt a habit is to make it visible; it is to turn it from a compulsion to a choice. When the crisis subsides, we might have occasion to ask whether we want to return to normal, or whether there might be something we've seen during this break in the routines that we want to bring into the future. We might ask, after so many have lost their jobs, whether all of them are the jobs the world most needs, and whether our labor and creativity would be better applied elsewhere. We might ask, having done without it for a while, whether we really need so much air travel, Disneyworld vacations, or trade shows. What parts of the economy will we want to restore, and what parts might we choose to let go of? And on a darker note, what among the things that are being taken away right now – civil liberties, freedom of assembly, sovereignty over our bodies, in-person gatherings, hugs, handshakes, and public life – might we need to exert intentional political and personal will to restore?...

Some commentators have observed how it plays neatly into an agenda of totalitarian control. A frightened public accepts abridgments of civil liberties that are otherwise hard to justify, such as the tracking of everyone's movements at all times, forcible medical treatment, involuntary quarantine, restrictions on travel and the freedom of assembly, censorship of what



Photo: Essay author Charles Eisenstein

the authorities deem to be disinformation, suspension of habeas corpus, and military policing of civilians. Many of these were underway before COVID-19; since its advent, they have been irresistible. The same goes for the automation of commerce; the transition from participation in sports and entertainment to remote viewing; the migration of life from public to private spaces; the transition away from place-based schools toward online education, the decline of brick-and-mortar stores, and the movement of human work and leisure onto screens. COVID-19 is accelerating preexisting trends, political, economic, and social.

While all the above are, in the short term, justified on the grounds of flattening the curve (the epidemiological growth curve), we are also hearing a lot about a “new normal”; that is to say, the changes may not be temporary at all. Since the threat of in-

fectious disease, like the threat of terrorism, never goes away, control measures can easily become permanent. If we were going in this direction anyway, the current justification must be part of a deeper impulse. I will analyze this impulse in two parts: the reflex of control, and the war on death. Thus understood, an initiatory opportunity emerges, one that we are seeing already in the form of the solidarity, compassion, and care that COVID-19 has inspired.

The Reflex of Control

At the current writing, official statistics say that about 25,000 people have died from COVID-19. (Update: that was March 25. Now, on April 2, it is 50,000...) By the time it runs its course, the death toll could be ten times or a hundred times bigger, or even, if the most alarming guesses are right, a thousand times bigger...my guess is about 200,000-300,000 deaths in the U.S.

—more if the medical system is overwhelmed, less if infections are spread out over time—and 3 million globally. Those are serious numbers. Not since the [Hong Kong Flu](#) pandemic of 1968/9 has the world experienced anything like it...Let us be aware of two contradictory tendencies in human affairs. The first is the tendency for hysteria to feed on itself, to exclude data points that don't play into the fear, and to create the world in its image. The second is denial, the irrational rejection of information that might disrupt normalcy and comfort. As [Daniel Schmactenberger](#) asks, How do you know what you believe is true?

In the face of the uncertainty, I'd like to make a prediction: The crisis will play out so that we never will know. If the final death tally, which will itself be the subject of dispute, is lower than feared, some will say that is because the controls worked. Others will say it is because the disease wasn't as dangerous as we were told... ■

The above writing is an excerpt from a 9,000 word essay by Charles Eisenstein. [To read or listen to the entire piece](#) go to:

www.charleseisenstein.org

Charles Eisenstein is a public speaker, [gift economy](#) advocate, and the author of several books including *The Ascent of Humanity* (2007), *Sacred Economics* (2011), *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know Is Possible* (2013) and *Climate: A New Story* (2018).



LET US HEAR FROM YOU To submit an article, opinion, comment, or anything of interest, e-mail shawnleon33@gmail.com

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THE FOGHORN NEWS: CUTTING THROUGH THE FOG OF WAR

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