



VETERANS FOR PEACE
HUMBOLDT BAY
CHAPTER 56

THE FOGHORN

SEPTEMBER
2015

“Cutting Through the Fog of War”

SEPTEMBER GOLDEN RULE REPORT

By: **Chuck Dewitt**

On Saturday August 1st. The Golden Rule sailed into San Diego Bay. The nearly 700 mile voyage was accomplished by Captain David Robson and crew members; Mike Gonzalez, Helen Jaccard, Jan Passion, and Skip Oliver. Jan needed to disembark at Morrow Bay and was replaced by Skip for the remainder of the voyage. The boat performed incredibly well, one small issue with the alternator was corrected and except for a distinct lack of viable wind everything went as planned. Nine days from Humboldt Bay to San Diego Bay with two stops, one at Morrow Bay and one at Santa Barbara. I've not got any photos this month so please check the Face Book site, other folks are putting pics up to view. The Rule will stay at Shelter Island for the next 3 weeks before starting back north on a very leisurely trip with many stops on the way. Ultimately it will return to Humboldt Bay for minor repairs and to be finished. There's many small details we didn't have time to work on prior to leaving for San Diego.

The National V.F.P. Convention starts this week and we expect everyone to visit the vessel, perhaps even go for a short cruise around the harbor. The Project also needs future crew members. Go to the web site, pull up an application, fill it out and send it in so we can begin processing and lining up crew for future ventures. We are also going to need shore support to follow the Rule or perhaps lead and prepare each port for arrival, contacting news papers, radio stations T.V. and various local groups that can endorse the Mission. The Rule will continue to sail the West Coast for a year or two and then move to the Gulf and up the Mississippi and back. Eventually rounding Florida and up the East Coast, ultimately into the Great Lakes. Think about where you would like to travel with the Rule and How much time you might be able to donate. The Rule will also need repairs in the future. It would be really good to have a list of wood workers, electricians, painters and just all round handy persons around the country that might be available in a time of need to step in and give a helping hand in some out of the way port that no one's ever heard of. I'm thinking that workers could actually stay on the boat and eat with the crew.

While in San Diego, hopefully we will have AIS installed. This will allow anyone to follow us while at sea, keep track of our exact location 24-7. So here we are in San Diego and not a scratch on her, and I remember someone once saying "yeah, that'll be the day, maybe in a Blue Moon". Well we got the Blue Moon and here we are, it's still sinking in. Maybe that's not the right word?????

Respectfully submitted by Chuck DeWitt, Restoration Coordinator, Golden Rule Project, August 2015.....

SEE FOLLOWING PAGE



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*GOLDEN RULE HEADED FOR THE BONFIRE
IN 2010*



*GOLDEN RULE HEADED TO SAN DIEGO
VFP CONVENTION IN 2015*



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BRIAN TERRELL: U.S. DRONE CAMPAIGN NEEDS TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED A FAILURE

By *Kouros Ziaban*

EHRAN (FNA)- The assassination drone campaign on the tribal areas of Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen and Afghanistan has been one of the controversial plans of the US government in the recent years.

The White House, State Department and Pentagon officials maintain that the drone attacks are aimed at targeting the Al-Qaeda terrorists in these countries and crushing their strongholds; however, figures indicate that the majority of the victims of the Unmanned Aerial Vehicles dispatched to the region are civilians. The Bureau of Investigative Journalism has recently revealed that between 2004 and 2015, there have been 418 drone strikes against Pakistan alone, resulting in the killing of 2,460 to 3,967 people, including at least 423 civilians. That's while some sources put the number of civilian casualties in Pakistan during the 11-year period at 962.

An American peace activist and speaker tells Fars News Agency that the drone strategy was not a blunder which President Bush committed, rather it was a "crime" that he perpetrated and President Obama perpetuated.

According to the 58-year-old Brian Terrell, the US government is not only claiming innocent lives through drone attacks, but endangering its own security and undermining its public stature.

"The reality that US drone strikes are a recruiting tool for Al-Qaeda is good news for war profiteers, even as it is alarming to anyone who is interested in the security of the US and the peace and stability of the counties where they are occurring," he said.

"Instead of manufacturing weapons in order to wage war, the US is now waging war in order to manufacture more weapons," Terrell noted.

Brian Terrell lives and works on a small farm in Maloy, Iowa. He has traveled to many regions across the world for public speaking events, including in Europe, Latin America, and Korea. He has also visited Palestine, Bahrain, and Iraq and returned from his second visit to Afghanistan last February. He is a co-coordinator for Voices for Creative Non-Violence and event coordinator for the Nevada Desert Experience.

FNA talked to Mr. Terrell about the US government's military policy and its conduct with regard to the crisis-hit Middle East, the drone attacks and the legacy of the "War on Terror." The following is the full text of the interview.

Q: The US drone attacks in Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen have taken a heavy toll on the civilian population of these countries, although it's being purported that the drone campaigns are aimed at targeting the Al-Qaeda strongholds. Has the US government been able to achieve this goal through dispatching unmanned drones to these already impoverished and underdeveloped areas?

A: If the goals of US drone strikes were actually to destroy Al-Qaeda and bring stability to the regions under attack, then the drone campaign would need to be acknowledged a failure. Nabeel Khoury, the deputy chief of mission in Yemen from 2004 to 2007, has noted that "given Yemen's tribal structure, the US generates roughly forty to sixty new enemies for every AQAP [al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula] operative killed by drones" and this perception is shared by many former diplomats and military commanders experienced in the region.

Before he retired in 1960, US President Eisenhower cautioned of the emergence of a self-perpetuating "military-industrial complex." The profit to be made by the private sector in the production of armaments was growing out of proportion to the economy and he warned that this gives incentive to provoke conflict. Since that time, the profitability has grown along with corporate influence on the electoral process and corporate control over the media. President Eisenhower's fears for the future are today's reality.

Instead of manufacturing weapons in order to wage war, the US is now waging war in order to manufacture more weapons. The reality that US drone strikes are a recruiting tool for Al-Qaeda is good news for war profiteers, even as it is alarming to anyone who is interested in the security of the US and the peace and stability of the counties where they are occurring.

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Next VFP56 meeting will be held on Thursday, Sept. 3rd at 7:00 PM. Meeting will be held at 24 Unitarian Fellowship Way, Bayside, Jacoby Creek Road. 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.



AHHA:

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AHHA's TINY HOUSE EXPO

Saturday, September 26, Noon - 6pm
 at the Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship,
 24 Fellowship Drive, Bayside, CA



Save the Date: Saturday Sept. 26 AHHA'S TINY HOUSE EXPO

*Affordable Homeless Housing Alternatives
 Options and Solutions with Humboldt Homeless*

Join AHHA (Affordable Homeless Housing Alternatives, Saturday, September 26, 2015, for an all-day family friendly Tiny House Expo, on the grounds of the Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Bayside, California. AHHA's goal is to bring affordable, doable options to Humboldt communities and immediate solutions for our homeless neighbors. This is a chance for Humboldt to come together in support of our homeless and continue the creative and successful project begun at the first AHHA Community Forum in November of 2014.

The Tiny House Expo will be AHHA's first major fundraising event. The Expo will be a hands on opportunity to experience affordable living options, with demonstrations of community-centered living units, such as sanctuary camps and tiny home villages. There will be food, entertainment and educational forums. We are seeking assistance and participation from Humboldt businesses, educators, artists, chefs, contractors, politicians and the curious public. All are invited to participate with AHHA as we show off viable legal options for safe, warm and dry places to sleep for all residents. AHHA welcomes your participation, talents, and energy to make this Tiny House Expo a success, and to move forward with positive solutions. Come learn and work towards affordable homeless housing alternatives!

For further information or to donate to the Tiny House Expo event, call: Edie Jessup, (707) 407-0047, Nezzie Wade (707) 445-5883, or email ahha.humco@gmail.com.



*Affordable Homeless Housing Alternatives AHHA ahha.humco@gmail.com
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In February of this year, for example, the US Navy's \$122.4 million contract modification to Raytheon Missile Systems Co. to buy more than 100 Tomahawk missiles to replace those fired into Syria was celebrated in the media and by members of Congress without regard to the moral, legal or strategic efficacy of those attacks. The only justification needed for these lethal attacks, it seems, is that they sell missiles.

Q: In October 2013, a group of countries at the United Nations, led by Brazil, China and Venezuela, officially protested against the deployment of unmanned aerial attacks against sovereign nations by the Obama administration. The debate at the UN was the first time when the legality of US's use of remotely piloted aircraft and its human cost was discussed on a global level. Christof Heyns, the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions warned about the proliferation of UAVs among states and terrorist groups. What's your reaction to this ongoing debate regarding the legal basis of using drones and the fact that the international community has started to voice its opposition to this dangerous practice?

A: Every state employs lawyers to give justification for that state's actions, no matter how egregious, but there is no real debate about the legality of the use of drones to attack or surveil over countries where the US is not at war. The official policy is that before lethal force can be used against someone who is not a combatant on a battlefield, it must be made certain "that he or she poses 'an imminent threat of violent attack' against America." This might give the mistaken impression that at least an effort is made to conduct the drone campaign in compliance to international law.

In February 2013, however, a US Department of Justice White Paper, "Lawfulness of a Lethal Operation Directed Against a US Citizen Who Is a Senior Operational Leader of Al-Qa'ida or an Associated Force," was leaked that elucidates the administration's new and more flexible definition of the word "imminent." "First," it declares, "the condition that an operational leader present an 'imminent' threat of violent attack against the United States does not require the United States to have clear evidence that a specific attack on US persons and interests will take place in the immediate future."

The position of the US government is that it can kill anyone anywhere whether their identity is known or not, if their "patterns of behavior" or "signature" is consistent with that of someone who might possibly pose a threat at any time in the future. The "signature" of an imminent threat "is a male between the ages of 20 and 40," says former US ambassador to Pakistan, Cameron Munter. "My feeling is one man's combatant is another man's - well, a chump who went to a meeting." Another senior State Department official has been quoted as saying that when the CIA sees "three guys doing jumping jacks," the agency thinks it is a terrorist training camp.

There is clearly no legal support to the claim that these killings are

legitimate acts of war. When the military acts outside the law, it is a gang or a mob. Whether the victims of drone attacks are known and positively identified – this rarely happens – or suspicious due to their behavior or "collateral damage," men, women and children unintentionally killed, these are no more than gang style hits or drive by shootings. When a lawless mob kills someone because of suspected misconduct without a trial, [then] that is called lynching. Among the most horrific violations of law and human values is the practice of "double tapping," where drones hover above their original victims and then strike the first responders who come to the aid of the wounded and dead, following the logic that anyone coming to the aid of someone who was following a suspicious pattern of behavior is also following a suspicious pattern of behavior.

One more layer of criminality encrusting this program is the fact that often drone attacks are carried out by members of the uniformed military on the orders of the CIA, bypassing the ordinary chain of command.

As deployed by the US, drones are proving to be a weapons system with little or no defensive capability, useful for assassinations, but "useless in a contested environment," admitted the chief of the Air Force's Air Combat Command two years ago. It may be arguable that even the possession of such weapons is illegal.

These killings are simply murders. They are acts of terror. They are crimes. It is gratifying that some in the international community and in the US are speaking out and attempting to put an end to them.

Q: Ben Emmerson, the UN special rapporteur on human rights and counter-terrorism noted in a report that as of October 2013, there were 33 drone strikes by the United States, which caused the massive killing of civilians in violation of the international law. Are the United Nations and its associated bodies capable of holding the United States accountable, or is it that the international law is not necessarily going to be observed in this specific matter?

A: This is an essential question, is it not? If the US is not held accountable for its crimes, what credibility do the UN and other international institutions have? How can international law be applied to any nation?

The drone technology allows for war crimes to be committed from the midst of American communities- if the victims are in Yemen, Pakistan or Afghanistan, the perpetrators are right here at home and stopping them is also the responsibility of local law enforcement. The Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the US Constitution reads: "...all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding." I have been arrested while nonviolently protest-

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ing at drone operation bases in Nevada, New York and Missouri and no judge has ever considered that those actions are justified as attempts to stop a crime from being committed. Before sentencing me to six months in prison for the petty offense of trespassing, one federal judge ruled, "Domestic law always trumps international law!"

Allowing the US to get away with murder threatens public order and security at home as well as abroad.

Q: Some UN officials have warned that technology is being misused as a form of "global policing". The US government has expanded its drone operations in the recent years and taken its un-piloted aerial vehicles to areas such as Iraq, Libya and Gaza Strip. Even there've been cases that the American drones have flown over Iran's airspace. Won't such actions create mistrust between the United States and the nations in the region whose countries are subject to drone attacks?

A: The concept of any one nation taking the role of "global policing" is troubling in itself, even more so when that nation has shown such disdain for rule of law as the US has. Drone strikes, Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib, torture, testing nuclear weapons on native treaty lands, all call into question the US role of world police.

The US polices the globe the same as it increasingly polices its own streets. The federal government issues attack weapons, even armored cars and tanks, to local police departments in cities large and small and police are trained to view the people they are supposed to be protecting and serving as enemies.

With less than 5% of the world's population, the US has more than 25% of the world's prisoners and the prison population is disproportionately made up of people of color. Police departments in the US often arrest and all too often kill American citizens on American streets based on "racial profiling," which is only a domestic version of the "signature strike." Young men of certain demographics can be killed based on their "patterns of behavior" in Baltimore as in Waziristan.

A large portion of the residual US troops and contractors in Afghanistan are there to train the Afghan police! The irony of this may be lost on American's, but not on the world community.

Q: A recent study indicates that 74% of the Pakistanis, especially following the intensification of drone attacks under President Obama, consider the United States an enemy. This is while the government of Pakistan is cooperating with the United States in the "War on Terror" scheme. Does the drone campaign have an influence on the public image of the United States in the countries that become the subject of un-piloted aircraft missiles?

A: While cooperating with the US in the "war on terror," Pakistan has also been actively protesting the drone killings and has repeatedly ordered the US to stop them. Last year, the UN adopted a resolution, jointly presented by Pakistan, Yemen and Switzerland, against drone strikes, to no avail. The administration's position is that the government in Islamabad has to tell the people of Pakistan that they are objecting to the strikes, but

secretly they approve of them. What can it mean for a government to give secret permission to anyone to do anything? Still, more, for a government to give permission to a foreign military to use its skies to summarily execute its citizens? Whether this is true or not, for the US to operate lethally inside Pakistan against the expressed orders of its government is an attack on Pakistan's sovereignty and undermines its institutions. Of course, these actions have an appropriate influence on the public image of the US in the countries subject to drone strikes and around the world.

Q: Generally, what do you think about the civilian cost of the US government's project of the War on Terror? It was a movement started by President Bush, and although President Obama had criticized it during the 2007 presidential debates, he continued the practices of his predecessor, including an intensive military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan and maintaining the overseas detention facilities where the terrorism suspects are kept. President Obama had criticized Mr. Bush's "foreign policy based on a flawed ideology" but it seems that he is repeating the same mistakes. What's your perspective on that?

A: In the 2008 campaign, Barack Obama told a rally in Iowa, the state where I live, that it might actually be necessary to "bump up" the military budget beyond the record levels established by the Bush administration. The cost of bumping up the already bloated military budget is borne by the poorest people here and abroad. In several ways, Obama signaled before he was elected that he would continue some of Bush's worst policies. These policies were not "mistakes" when Bush implemented them, they were crimes. Maintaining them are not mistakes now.

The US will not solve its domestic crises or find internal security, nor will it be able to make any contribution to the peace of the world without reordering its priorities and pursuing what Dr. Martin Luther King called a "radical revolution of values."

Interview by Kourosh Ziabari

VFP Convention 2015: A Reflection by Post-Cold War Vet

August 12, 2015

By Michael Bassett

I am grateful to Veterans For Peace (VFP) for the life-changing experience they gave me at the VFP 30th Annual Convention recently held in San Diego, CA., and for honoring me with an invitation to speak before the Korea Peace Campaign about projects I've done on the Korean Peninsula - or as I call it "the world's most advanced propaganda war."

On my arrival, a Vietnam veteran was reciting his smell-of-war poem "Piss, Shit, and Blood." A few more Vietnam veterans followed; a female vet spoke of rape by superiors, and a former officer spoke of the suicide of his brother that couldn't "get over" the war to the satisfaction of his father.

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A former British SAS soldier who fought in Afghanistan sat in the front row next to an Iraqi Freedom double-amputee, and a WWII D-day survivor. The SAS soldier disobeyed gag orders against sharing things he'd seen and done. Threatened with punishment, he went on to denounce his Oath of Allegiance, returned his medals to the British Empire, and shared his stories with the world regardless.

The veterans' poems painfully resurrected memories of: people burying people alive, and children with missing limbs; destroyed villages and mass migration; crimes against humanity and global instability - corporate and political greed that fueled it all. War is cruel and inhumane. The lies that stab America's jingoistic instruments of democracy into the global psyche are largely and manipulatively ignored, but these veterans came to expose them.

As they uprooted the truths of war from their souls, a healing process began in mine; followed by an overflow of tears.

Like others there, at some point I too found myself overseas, charging the "liberating instrument" of war forward into foreign societies, until one day I did it so many times that I learned to see the world through the eyes of my enemy. It took years for me to cope with the cognitive dissonance that ensued, and many more to make sense of it. Admittedly, at some point I diverged from brainwashing enough to have sympathy for my enemies.

At first it felt unpatriotic to care about the enemy's point of view, but the longer I suppressed it, the more frequent the hauntings came. I realized at the convention that the most patriotic thing a veteran can do is - on our return home - to share what we've seen, and then oppose, undermine, and reject the war machine on every front. We must dis-incentivize war and greed in order to create a permanent and lasting, peaceful coexistence.

Indeed, VFP members maintain a united front on that objective, and view 'the necessity of our mission' with a survival mentality. VFP members shared with me their peace-waging efforts, which were nothing short of heroic and awe-inspiring.

At dinner I met a double-amputee who - contrary to my first assumption - lost his legs (and a frontal lobe), not in Vietnam, but in an act of bravery and resistance against the war machine -- when he laid on tracks to block a train en route to South America and filled with weapons to support the Contra Wars. He called 'war' a "war crime," yet the government he very honorably served had labeled him a domestic terrorist for opposing the acts he'd learned were evil by witnessing them first-hand in service to his country.

But as I came to find out, none of these veterans fit the "domestic terrorist" mold. They highlighted the importance of sharing stories, peaceful protest, and non-violent civil disobedience as their strategy to ending our addiction to war. And VFP members (as I learned) make global contributions beyond peace activism. A group based out of Vietnam conducts chemical and munitions cleanups, and another group builds homes (free-of-charge) in disaster area's, and in the remains of conflict zones.

The following days of speeches, seminars, forums, and panel discussions were delivered by vets who were highly-educated and respected members of

their communities. They were doctors, lawyers, professors, CEO's, politicians - and all shades of retired government officials ranging from CIA officers to diplomats.

In their midst I felt a level of inspiration missing since my days in uniform. And I gained what felt like a long-lost family. My heart was truly touched by their war stories and peace activism. VFP members are living proof that small groups can have noticeable, positive impacts on the world.

The 2015 Convention theme was "Peace and Reconciliation in the Pacific." Appropriately, the convention fell on the anniversaries of the nuking of Hiroshima (06.08.1945) and Nagasaki (09.08.1945), and the division of the Korean Peninsula (10.08.1945). As we know, the Korean War is the final remnant of WWII, yet there hasn't been peace and reconciliation in Asia despite the "end of the Cold War."

Everything we discussed of the unending Pacific wars can be symbolically represented with one picture - an image of two USN officers and a beautiful woman eating a "Mushroom Cloud" cake just a few months later.

It is almost as if the United States has revised history and brainwashed Americans to such thorough extent that in our national psyche, the suffering of Asia is lost for basking in our successes fighting the "Great War" in Europe (a topic of discussion for another time).

It is time for America to remember trauma's of the Forgotten War in Korea; and dedicate our selves on this 70th anniversary of the peninsula's division to ending this perpetual crime against humanity that is the Korean War".

I now realize that my healing process - my own "re-humanization" - began the moment I first questioned war as an instrument of national policy. Thanks to VFP I know that to complete my therapy (and do my patriotic duty), I must commit myself to completely rejecting war as an option and lead by acting for peace.





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Chapter 56**

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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.



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