OMNI, PENTAGON PROPAGANDA MACHINE
NEWSLETTER #1, March 12, 2013.
Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Peace, Justice, Nonviolence, Mercy, and Care of the Environment.

My blog: The War Department and Peace Heroes
http://jamesricharbennett.blogspot.com/
Newsletters on Peace, Justice, and Ecology:
http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/
Index:
http://www.omnicenter.org/omni-newsletter-general-index/
See: Fulbright, Imperialism, Language for War, Lying, Militarism, Pentagon, Recruiting, and more.

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Bibliographic information

Title     Control of information in the United States: an annotated bibliography
          Issue 1 of Meckler Corporation’s bibliographies on communications and First Amendment law

Author    James R. Bennett

Publisher Meckler, 1987

ISBN      0887360823, 9780887360824

Length    587 pages, 2943 annotated entries

Subjects Censorship
          Communication policy
          Political Science / Censorship
          Reference / Bibliographies & Indexes

The Pentagon propaganda machine Editorial Review - Kirkus Reviews. Senator Fulbright's fight against the military industrial complex is on. Round one: *The Arrogance of Power*. Round two: *The Pentagon Propaganda Machine*. Here the Arkansan asserts that the war and the military have become part of our environment, like pollution. The once limited technical functions of the armed forces have expanded to a political role for which their parochial training has not prepared them. Fulbright discusses the dangerously vast and powerful communications network by which the Defense Department [Dick: Same old War Department.] propagandizes its own policies and represses dissemination of opposing views. Through pro-war speeches by high ranking officers to community groups at taxpayers' expense, by controlled extension of research grants, and by pseudo-accurate depictions of military activities in Pentagon-prepared news clips, the military has become the Big Brother enforcer of U.S. foreign policy opinion. Fulbright cites the inordinate emphasis of the government news coverage on the combat contributions of South Vietnamese troops to convince the public of the success of Nixon's Vietnamization plan. He reveals a Defense Department memorandum which offered ""all practical assistance"" to any civilian scientist who would support the ABM proposal. Equally chilling was the Pentagon's refusal to authorize assistance (essential for production) to a film based on the Palomares incident, reasoning that ""no positive value seemed to be inherent in dramatizing and publicizing worldwide such accidents."" Contrast with this the
generous support of John Wayne's hawkish flick, The Green Berets. Fulbright's argument is articulately stated, and will add considerable leverage to the position of those who fear the encroachments the military have made on our civilian system.

Marines aim to counter teachers' opposition to recruiting students

By Tony Perry and Howard Blume, Los Angeles Times  July 28, 2012

Educators visit Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego to watch exercises, gain a more nuanced view of the military and maybe recommend it to students.

Staff Sgt. James McFalin gets some laughs as he tells educators from L.A. and Sacramento about Marine recruits' training. The teachers were participating in a four-day workshop at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, designed to counterbalance opposition to recruitment of high school students. (Don Bartletti, Los Angeles Times / July 24, 2012)
Educators get a taste of the Marine Corps

In a series of Power Point briefings, officers and enlisted personnel stressed the discipline, sense of purpose and educational benefits of military service. A young Marine can get a college degree while on active duty or attend college or technical school at government expense once his or her service is completed.

As the week continued, it was clear that part of the pitch stuck with the educators.

"It's impressive," said William Lozoya, a music teacher and band director at San Fernando High School. "I had no idea that there are so many support programs, so many ways they can get an education or training."

Brian Metzger, an English teacher at Highland Park High, said that counselors at his school "actively discourage anyone from enlisting. Now I can at least provide a more balanced view for students to make up their own minds."

Miles Bonner, guidance counselor at Sun Valley High, said he planned to present military service "as a viable option that students should consider."

Melissa Cheng, Chinese-language teacher at South Pasadena High, said she believes she can now overcome resistance from her students' parents. "Chinese parents have a kind of bias against the military," she said. "But the Marine Corps believes in discipline and honor, which are very Chinese values."

Not everyone comes away from an educator workshop so enthusiastic.

Arlene Inouye, a speech therapist in L.A. Unified who has spearheaded the counter-recruiting effort, attended a workshop several years ago but was unmoved. Still, she was impressed with how respectfully she was treated by the Marines.

"They really want you to come because they're so convinced," said Inouye, the elected treasurer of the Los Angeles teachers union. "They feel they can turn anyone around."

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TELLING THE STORIES OF US WARS

The Wars, The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and Chris Burden’s The Other Vietnam Memorial.

By Dick Bennett

Rise of US Imperialism Post-WWII

WWII under President Roosevelt released not only indescribable, immeasurable destructive energy, but also an enormous wave of idealism for the future: workers union rights, the Four Freedoms, the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But soon, by 1946 the reaction swept in just as following WWI against the League of Nations. Instead of the dream of ending wars by nations united for peace and cooperation, nations resumed their old us and them. The United States empire, already established in the Pacific, took flight as the Leader of the Free World—Taft-Hartley legislation, Truman Doctrine, Cold War.

Following Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, the US began to developed new nuclear weapons, most of them over several decades, each matched by the Soviet Union (US/SU), which innovated once or twice itself in the world’s most dangerous arms race. In 1947 the foundation was laid for the US National Security State: the Armed Forces united under the Pentagon, the War Department euphemized into the Department of “Defense,” the CIA and the National Security Administration established.

Korean and Vietnam Wars

NATO was formed for the “Free World” against the Soviets. The Soviets created their bloc against Western invasion—from Napoleon to Hitler and, they feared, to NATO. And the Cold War shifted into high gear. But Victorious WWII was not to be repeated by the US. The Korean War ended in stalemate. And then the Vietnam War torpedoed the US Imperial Ship of State. How measure victory and defeat? If your goal was body count, then the US won: between two and three million Vietnamese were killed; tens of thousands more if you count fetuses aborted. But by other measures the US lost, and retreated back to the mainland.

Vietnam War Syndrome

This defeat has rankled military leaders and the warrior patriots in government. It became important to them to regain the confidence commensurate to an Empire based upon armed force, invasion, and eventually occupation. Like football teams that play sure losers to start the season, the US began with victories in the 1950s—including overthrowing the elected Iranian and Guatemalan governments. But Vietnam surprised the imperial Pentagon, for how could an impoverished country withstand the firepower of the US of A?

The withdrawal was a humiliation for the gunslingers. They would not rest until the stain was erased.
President Reagan invaded Nicaragua and Grenada. President Bush I invaded Panama and Iraq. President Clinton invaded Serbia. And President Bush II invaded Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan.

President Obama

Thus President Obama’s policy statement May 2012 was no surprise as much as it was a culmination of long Pentagon and other warrior pressures. In May, 2012, President Obama signed a proclamation establishing the “Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War” to begin this year, to last for thirteen years (to Veterans Day 2025), and to be conducted by the Pentagon. (2012 is the 50th if you mark the war’s beginning in January 1962, when open combat by US forces began.) Why this attention? It is certainly not to acknowledge the deaths of several million civilians, atrocities like the My Lai Massacre, war-crime chemical weapons (Agent Orange: dioxin), or the use of twice the explosive tonnage as employed by all sides in WWII and against a mainly peasant people who had fought to liberate themselves first from French colonialism and then from US neocolonialism. No, for Obama, campaigning for the presidency, the “national shame” was failure of the US to fully honor our killed and surviving troops, and the commemoration is meant to assuage guilt fully and finally by commemorating each battle of the war (Hue, Khe Sanh, Saigon, and on and on) and those US soldiers who fought in each, whether guilty of atrocities or not. Thus it is an attempt to delete from the national memory, according to one historian, the “basic facts about the most horrendous imperialist (North-South) war of the twentieth century, as well as the most unpopular war in U.S. history.” Erasing the Vietnam Syndrome forever, Obama asserted, would make the US “stronger than before.”

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Chris Burden’s The Other Vietnam Memorial.

Obama’s effort to efface responsibility for massive US criminal behavior and to blame the victim is inseparable from the history of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (and similar memorials around the country). For example, in 1977 President Carter, who authorized the establishment of the Memorial, denied any US obligations to Vietnam, because the destruction, he said, was mutual. The eventual memorial as finally assembled offers mixed purposes and affects. The original Wall, designed by Maya Lin, does not heroize warriors; it is the antipode of the Marine Corps Memorial. It softens the divisiveness of the war by omitting opponents of the war, patriotic effusions, or signs of defeat and humiliation. Rather, by listing the names of the killed soldiers, the monument neutrally permits to each visitor their private reflection on personal loss. Ordinary people interpret the discourse of the dead without national intervention.

The Additions

Of course, such a monument for people, not nation, outraged many. One Pentagon officer wondered why “we” should build a memorial to losers. Like him, many saw Lin’s Wall as a counter-monument to national glory and soldiers’ heroism, some approvingly, others disapprovingly, some of those vehemently: they wanted a triumphant monument, like the Iwo Jima monument. The monument’s chronological, democratizing, equalizing (for Lin “the heart of the design”) differed from traditional hierarchical war monuments and the hierarchical orientation of officials. The conflict resulted in the present compromise: the addition of a sculpture of three combat soldiers and a US flag. Finally was added a sculpture of women, the Vietnam Women’s Memorial, another arrangement of three figures. In the opinion of some commentators, these additions, even the women’s memorial, obscured the
Wall’s inclusivity and equality with “patriarchal demands.”

**Awareness of Incompleteness, the Need for Further Addition or Alternative**

But these debates and these additions do not grasp the disquietude many of us feel morally when we contemplate the immense absence the Wall displays. The Wall of Names, in its original spare design and especially with its additions, expresses the assumption that the US is the sole injured party, because it deletes reference to the devastation of Vietnam and the slaughter of two to three million Vietnamese, not to mention those killed earlier by the French with our financing. It is the *Wall of US names.* The Vietnamese youth killed for US anticommunism and Sovietphobia, the Vietnamese children lost and injured by bombs and dioxin for US nationalist and commercial expansion westward, deserved no remembrance, no pity. The arrogance of our leaders, their patriotic rhetoric and duplicitous justifications for mass killing made them incapable of perceiving the enemy’s children as victims.

Given all of these failures, Chris Burden’s sculpture, *The Other Vietnam Memorial,* takes its place as the great alternative to the Vietnam Memorial Wall and as the greatest memorial shaming of US nationalist barbarism. First shown in 1991 in the Museum of Modern Art, Burden’s art symbolically registers the estimated 3 million casualties by using a basic catalogue of nearly 4,000 Vietnamese names permuted by a computer. These names were then etched onto 3 by 6.5 foot copper plates sandwiched together in pairs and mounted into steel frames hinged to a 13-foot-high steel pole. Imagine a giant, Rolodex, symbolically listing the enemy’s casualties—names that US Pentagon and president after president would expunge from US collective historical memory.

Even more significantly, Burden’s great monument to memory and empathy reminds us not only of US Vietnam War crimes but of the similar crimes in the several dozen US invasions of other countries since WWII. Instead of the glorification of chauvinism, killing, soldiers, military glory, and jingoistic nationalism, Burden, by offering an alternative, inclusive vision of species unity, calls into question the past 70 years of fear-and-hatred-mongering and its product, permanent war. It does not offer consolation and closure, as does Maya Lin’s Wall, at least to some. Rather, it calls for sympathy and justice for innocent “enemies,” for the abolition of jingoistic monuments, for resistance to present and future US wars of aggression, and once seen it will not let us sleep.

References:
---For a list of recent books on US imperialism and militarism see the 46 references for OMNI’s US Imperialism Book Forum (Sept. 21, 2012). Especially recommended: Blum’s *Killing Hope* and *Rogue Nation,* Nicholas Davies’ *Blood on Our Hands,* and Chalmers Johnson’s Blowback tetralogy.
IT’S THE WAR DEPARTMENT

Op-Ed: A lot of what we say and do becomes habit-forming. Groundhog Day 2013 could serve as a reminder that some political habits should be kicked. Here are a few starting with “defense budget.” No, it’s not a defense budget. It's a military budget. But countless people and organizations keep saying they want to cut “the defense budget” or reduce “defense spending.” The fact that there’s something officially called the Department of Defense—formerly the Department of War, until 1947—doesn’t make its huge budget a “defense budget.”

AIR SHOWS GROUNDED BY BUDGET CUTS—AT LAST

Russ Bynum. (AP). “Budget Cuts Ground Jet Shows.” Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (March 11, 2013). The relevance of this article is how many expensive but free shows the Navy’s Blue Angels, the Air Force’s Thunderbirds, and the Army’s Golden Knights skydivers perform. 190 were scheduled for this summer. The expected host communities are wailing at the loss of revenue, so popular are the shows, always a “tourism bonanza.” One city reported they would lose “a $2 million weekend for the area. That’s for hotels, employees, restaurants, souvenirs.” And the military regrets the loss of a great recruiting tool. [Enjoying the day with the killing machines, all at public expense.] –Dick

GOOGLE SEARCH, March 12, 2013, FIRST PAGE

1. Owner of Pentagon's Propaganda Firm Admits to Attacks on ...
   www.globalresearch.ca/owner-of-pentagon-propaganda/31037
The co-owner of a major Pentagon propaganda contractor publicly admitted Thursday that he was behind a series of coordinated misinformation campaigns ...

2. Amendment puts spotlight on Pentagon propaganda - USA Today
   www.usatoday.com/news/...05.../pentagon-propaganda/.../1
   by Gregory Korte - in 57 Google+ circles - More by Gregory Korte
May 9, 2012 – House member threatens an amendment to block funding for Pentagon propaganda efforts Wednesday, citing USA TODAY reports.

3. Pentagon overseas propaganda plan stirs controversy
   www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/.../pentagon.../1715741/
Nov 19, 2012 – **Pentagon** officers are being advised on countering Taliban **propaganda** using deceptive practices by a marketing expert, according to ...

4. **The Pentagon Propaganda Machine by Senator J. William Fulbright**

The **Pentagon Propaganda** Machine. by Senator J. William Fulbright. Vintage Books, 1971, paper. p4. Since the 1950s, as we have moved from crisis to crisis, ...

5. **Images for Pentagon Propaganda**
   - [Report images](#)

6. **Co-Owner Of Pentagon Propaganda Contractor Admits Attacking**
   [www.npr.org/.../co-owner-of-pentagon-propaganda-contra...](www.npr.org/.../co-owner-of-pentagon-propaganda-contra...)

   by Eyder Peralta - in 104 Google+ circles - More by Eyder Peralta

   May 24, 2012 – The **Pentagon** repudiated the smear campaign saying they are "intolerable."

7. **Propaganda 101: Pentagon To Debut Most Expensive Weapons**

   Oct 16, 2012 – The **pentagon** has reportedly “chosen” the Hollywood re-boot of Superman to
introduce the world to the most expensive weapons program in ...

8. **Pentagon Media Propaganda: Finding New, Clever Ways to Sell Old ...**
truth-out.org/.../11716-finding-new-clever-ways-to-sell-old-bad-idea...

Aug 31, 2012 – JACQUELINE MARCUS FOR BUZZFLASH AT TRUTHOUT Smug, greedy, well-fed white men have invented a language to conceal their sins.

9. **GAO auditing Pentagon propaganda campaigns - ABC News**
abcnews.go.com › Politics

GAO auditing Pentagon propaganda campaigns. By Tom Vanden Brook, USA TODAY. WASHINGTON. Share. Email. Comments. Print. Font Sizes. The top ...

abcnews.go.com › Investigative Unit

by Jonathan Karl - More by Jonathan Karl

Apr 21, 2008 – The New York Times spilled a lot of ink yesterday on the Pentagon's relationship with TV military analysts. The article raised some good points ...

11. **Academy Awards + Michelle Obama: Acknowledgment of Hollywood ...**
www.thomhartmann.com/.../academy-awards-michelle-obama-...

Feb 25, 2013 – Hollywood is and has been a very important part of the Military Industrial Complex -- the propaganda part. Selling wars and jingoism an

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