
Here is the link to all OMNI newsletters: http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/ For a knowledge-based peace, justice, and ecology movement and an informed citizenry as the foundation for change. SEEKING ALTERNATIVES TO MILITARISM, WARS, EMPIRE, FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE. Here is the link to the Index: http://www.omnicenter.org/omni-newsletter-general-index/ See: Veterans Day, Armed Forces Day, Imperialism, Individual Wars, Militarism, Torture, US Westward Expansion, War and Environment, War Resistance,

Instead of Dead Warriors, let us celebrate those who tried to prevent the killing.


OMNI NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL DAYS PROJECT

Two kinds of violence disrupt the harmony of our world: physical and structural. This newsletter is part of OMNI’s NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL DAYS PROJECT, by which we counter the structural conditioning for violence and wars in such celebrations as Columbus Day, Armed Forces Day, and Memorial Day. These national days of violence reinforce the national drive for hardness, punishment, wars, invasions and interventions—some fifty since WWII, amounting to permanent war, recounted by William Blum in Killing Hope and Rogue Nation and by Richard Rubenstein in his book Reasons to Kill: Why Americans Choose War (2010). Rubenstein analyzes seven “key rationales for war” employed by successive governments to gain public support for military action.

(The other half of the Project is the affirmation of nonviolent DAYS, such as United Nations Day, Human Rights Day, by which we strive for the goals of equity and health and protection of all species and a world free of war and the threat of war.)

“Memorial Day, it seems to me, should also honor the Thoreaus, the conscientious objectors, the anti-war protesters, who attempted to forestall or shorten the more unjust or immoral of these wars. It isn’t only the fallen soldiers who served the nation, but also those who worked to ensure that no soldiers fell in unjust wars, in wars that after the UN Charter was passed in 1945, would be designated as “illegal.” " - Juan Cole, Informed Comment, May 27, 2013
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To honor the fallen . . .
As we honor our fallen today, we vow to never forget, and to continue the march for peace on our streets and in our world.

* * *

"The ranks of veterans waiting more than a year for their benefits grew from 11,000 in 2009 to 245,000 in December, an increase of more than 2,000%. The VA expected the number of veterans waiting - currently about 900,000 - to continue to increase . . . .

There are, on average, 22 veteran suicides a day. "I'm not surprised at the number of us that kill ourselves," Lincoln Capstick, an unemployed Iraq War veteran in Indiana where the average wait on new claims is 612 days, said to Time Magazine.

So today, as the politicians heap praise upon America's veterans, and as American businesses use veterans as props to boost their sales, remember what their sacrifice has truly meant...and remember that their sacrifice is ongoing. . . .

A nation that does not care for its war veterans has no business making new ones." - W.R. Pitt, May 27, 2013 (at www.truthout.com)
In this encore broadcast, Vietnam veteran and author Karl Marlantes explains what we need to understand about the minds and hearts of our modern warriors.

Call or write your senator about the federal budget - soon to be debated!
Only one in six eligible families receives childcare assistance because there's not enough funding. Cut the bloated Pentagon budget, not our communities.
Medea Benjamin in response to CNN's Carol Costello’s comment of, ‘people think you’re ‘rude’ and crazy for interrupting the president:
“I think killing innocent people with drones is rude. . .

While the American soldiers who have died in the nation’s wars deserve to be memorialized, not all the wars they fought in do. A wise nation would barbecue with a sense of unease today, a sense of regret at all the unnecessary and merely greedy wars the nation has fought.

Memorial Day, it seems to me, should also honor the Thoreaus, the conscientious objectors, the anti-war protesters, who attempted to forestall or shorten the more unjust or immoral of these wars. It isn’t only the fallen soldiers who served the nation, but also those who worked to ensure that no soldiers fell in unjust wars, in wars that after the UN Charter was passed in 1945, would be designated as “illegal.” - Juan Cole, Informed Comment, May 27, 2013
Imagine if at some point during the 1990s or 1980s the President of the United States had given a speech. And this was his speech:

My fellow Americans, I've been regularly shooting missiles into people's houses in several countries. I've wiped out families. I've killed thousands of people. Hundreds of them have been little children.

I've killed grandparents, wives, daughters, neighbors. I've targeted people without knowing their names but because they appeared to be resisting an occupation of their country. I've killed whoever was too near them. Then I've shot another missile a few minutes later to kill whoever was trying to help the victims.

I don't charge these people with crimes. I don't seek their extradition. I don't even try to kidnap them. And I don't do this to defend against any imminent threat. I don't make you safer by doing this. It goes without saying (although the people in the countries I target keep saying it) that I'm generating more new enemies than I'm killing. But I urge you to remember this: All but four of the people I've killed have been non-U.S. citizens.

So here's what I'm going to do for you: I'm going to start applying the same standards I use for killing U.S. citizens to my killing of non-U.S. citizens, at least in certain countries, at least after another 18 months or so goes by. Sound good? I know, I know: what do you care? These are not even U.S. citizens we're talking about.

So, let me tell you about the four U.S. citizens.

One of them we didn't actually know who we were shooting at, and he turned out to be a U.S. citizen. Hell, for all I know a few other bodies could belong to U.S. citizens too -- It's not as if we know all the names and backgrounds.
A second one of the four we got because he was with the one and only U.S. citizen we targeted. So, that was a two-fer. We saved enough on missiles on that one to pay for a school or whatever it is people keep whining about wanting money for.

[Abdulrahman Awlaki. —Dick]
A third one was a 16-year-old American kid. He was the son of the one and only U.S. citizen I targeted. I hit him two weeks after killing his father. Sheer coincidence. I don't have any good explanation for it, but you'll just have to trust that I meant to take out a bunch of innocent non-American teenagers, and there happened tragically to be an American among them.

[Anwar Awlaki. See Scahill, Dirty Wars, Chs. 2 and 44. —Dick]
Fourth is the one U.S. citizen I meant to kill. I'd like to ask you to ignore certain facts about this one for the moment. Actually forever. Let's ignore the fact that we tried to kill him before any of the incidents that I now claim justified his killing. Let's ignore that my attorney general said back then that we were killing him for things he'd said, not for anything he'd done. Let's forget that we never charged him with any crime, never indicted him, never tried him, never sought his extradition, never appealed to U.S. or foreign or international courts. Let's forget that we've never made any evidence against him public, nor explained why we can't. Let's forget that nobody else has produced any evidence against him.

Now, let me tell you this: I only killed him because he was responsible for planning and executing violent attacks on the United States, was an imminent threat to the United States, and could not possibly have been captured. Got that? Write that down.

Now, it's true that courts and the legislature and the public are left out of this. But you're going to have to trust me.

There is not a single domestic or international law that permits the killing of human beings by someone who invents criteria for himself to meet and then claims on the basis of secret evidence to have met those criteria.

But, what do you care? You've already forgotten that for all but one of the people I've killed I don't claim to have met any criteria at all.

Now clap, you morons!
...

Some speech.

What would the response have been to this some decades back, as compared to last Thursday?
I think there might have been some outrage.

Instead of outrage, we're going to have more wars.

This memorial day, see if you can remember what it was like to object to giving presidents the power to murder us.

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**FOCUS: Juan Cole | Should Memorial Day Include Commemoration of Thoreau?**

Juan Cole, Informed Comment

Cole writes: "Thoreau was saying that in times of an unjust law and an unjust war, honorable persons will likely be in jail."

[READ MORE](#)

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**Cindy Sheehan's Soapbox**

Just Think About it...Where would we be?
Dear Friend,

This is my Memorial Day reflection. Today, finds Tour de Peace, and me, in Greenville, Il...we are on a figurative downhill ride to WashedUp, DeCeit now.

It's been a wonderful experience, so far, and I am including a recap in this newsletter.

I won't ever say, "Happy Memorial Day," because war is nothing to celebrate, ever.

Have a great day, and week.

Love & Peace

Cindy

"Just think about it...where would we be?"
My Memorial Day Reflections
Cindy Sheehan
As if one could escape the pervasive jingoism of Empire, I am freshly assaulted by every church on every corner and reminded that this weekend is Memorial weekend while cycling across the country with Tour de Peace.

Since 2004, Memorial Weekend has held special hell for me. My son, Casey, who was needlessly murdered in Iraq because of the lies of his government and the greed of corporations, was born on Memorial Day, so I have double sorrow this weekend.

Being here in the Bible Belt of the nation, we cannot pass a church or synagogue that doesn’t grossly glorify the horrifically deadly sin of war. There are obviously glaring exceptions like Unitarians, Quakers, Catholic Workers and Mennonites, but those sects are definitely far outside the pale of extremist US Christianity.

I am never surprised by the warmongering of some purported followers of Christ, but I can still get mad-sad at the “Yea, war!” messages on the garishly lighted signs at these pseudo-religious appendages of the Pentagon. What will these places of mammon worship do when warfare is fully robotic? Will the billboards and the yellow magnetic ribbons of parishioners read: "Support the Drones?"

One such piece of crapaganda in front of a “Christian” church in St. Louis read: “Think about it...where would we be without the sacrifices of our troops?"

My first knee-jerk, selfish reaction was: “Well, instead of putting my life on hold for three months and biking across the country for peace and justice, I would be home playing with my grandbabies and Casey would be there, too.” Maybe, just maybe, he would be married with children, himself.

Then, of course, I immediately went to the macro-analysis of that wonderful, "Christ-like" statement. MILLIONS of people would still be alive, and that’s just from this young century! Just think about it...looking back over the life of this war-loving Empire that we live in, the loss of life is practically incalculable and then there’s the loss of limb, sanity, home, security,
and reputation that cannot in anyway be quantified. The hearts of millions upon millions of mothers who rarely raise their children to be tools, or victims, of Empire would still be whole and not broken into a million tiny pieces.

**Where would we be?** Hmmm...the US wouldn’t be trillions of dollars in debt and perhaps bridges wouldn’t be collapsing and the money we would save on the expansion of Empire could be used to invest in education, infrastructure, healthcare and environmental sustainability, among other things. Just think of an economy based on creating art, literature and manufacturing life affirming and positive products only for consumption and not obscene profit. The war economy the US currently dis-enjoys literally sucks the life out of not just this country, but also the planet.

Just think about it...women and girls in other countries wouldn't be raped and female troops would not be sexually assaulted at the rate of about one out of three. Just think about it...the snake oil salesmen, oops, I mean military recruiters would thankfully be put out of the Murderers for Hire business.

Just think about it...the stains of places like Gitmo, Bagram and Abu Ghraib would have never been opened and countless "terrorists" would have never been illegally detained, tortured or murdered.

Just think about it...a world without the destructive nature of the US Military Empire. Like sociologist, Robert Jay Lifton said, "War is an atrocity producing event," and when some smarmy coward of a politician or slimy representative of god on earth starts spewing crap about "freedom," "democracy," "national security threat," "evil dictator," "weapons of mass destruction" "humanitarian intervention," or any number of other lies: RUN THE OTHER WAY.

Just think about it. Think about it carefully, I have and have come to the only conclusion there can be: this planet would be a vastly different and wonderful place.

**SUPPORT THE TROOPS?**

**HOW ABOUT NO WARS, NO TROOPS?**
ASH writes: "Who can tell of a good war, or anything good that has come from a war?"
Sunday, May 27, 2012

Reflections on FreeDUMB by Cindy Sheehan

FreeDUMB

Cindy Sheehan

“Expose yourself to your deepest fear; after that, fear has no power, and the fear of freedom shrinks and vanishes. You are free.”

Jim Morrison

“We perpetuate war by exalting its sacrifices...the least the rest of us can do is resist honoring the institution (Warfare State)” James Garner in the Americanization of Emily

Memorial Day is a double-gut wrencher for my family and me. Our son, brother (posthumous Uncle) and friend, Casey (who was killed in the illegal and disastrous war on Iraq), was born 33 years ago about one hour and one minute past Memorial Day on May 29th.

As I have written and said many times before, for most people Memorial weekend is a weekend of parades, cookouts and sleeping in. Our family used to have a big party for Casey’s birthday every year on Memorial weekend—never even suspecting that it would turn out to be such a sad weekend because for those of us who have had loved ones murdered by the Empire, it’s vastly different. No matter how many flags “patriots” display this weekend they can never know the pain.

After Casey’s funeral and the ceremony at the local cemetery, the limousines brought our family back to the church hall where several restaurants and many community members had set a lavish spread and for the first time since my life was
shattered, I was starving. However, even though I was on the verge of collapse, I was forced to go into a room with some local veterans to receive my Gold Star from an older woman who had her only two sons killed in Vietnam. I was in shock and received this demented medal as fast as I could, without much reflection, so I could eat sit down and eat.

Not long after that, I received an application to join the Gold Star Mothers of America ®. For some reason, I never returned the application and later, as my understanding of why my son was killed grew, my relief that I never joined the mostly pro-war organization grew and I was involved in founding an opposite organization, Gold Star Families for Peace, at the end of 2004.

In fact, I am a question in the FAQ’s of the Gold Star Mothers of America group:

**Is Cindy Sheehan part of your group?**

Cindy Sheehan is currently in the news. She and her organization have no connection whatever with American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. We are a 501 C(3) organization and, as such, do not engage in political activities. We do support our troops. After all, they are our children.

Of course, this answer assumes that people who work for peace don’t support the troops. How ironic this meme is when even CiaNN is noticing that 18 veterans commit suicide each and every day—over 6500 per year—more per year than have been killed by the “enemy” in over ten years of the US’s War of Terror. Does “supporting the troops” mean sending them to wars based on lies for profit, then discarding them when they return? Apparently to many reactionaries, this is the case.

This morning, a friend sent me an article about a documentary being made about the organization Gold Star Mothers of America ®, and the subject line was: **You (meaning me) won’t be in it.** Reading the article, I found that one of the goals of the filmmakers is to “raise awareness about what it means to be a Gold Star Mother and open Americans’ eyes — especially young people — to the sacrifice that has kept them free.”
So, in actuality, the goal of the movie is to promote the Warfare State propaganda that the US military is used to keep us “free” here in the states. I really wish that I could delude myself into believing that I am freer because my son died, but even if I believed that I don’t even know what it means. Even if this ephemeral freedom existed, what kind of “freedom” has to be purchased by another’s death? Patriotic mumbo jumbo jargon is no replacement for a son.

The Gold Star mother who gave me my star over eight years ago, now, has deluded herself for five decades that her sons died in Vietnam for her freedom, but how much energy does that take every day to avoid the truth? It must be nearly as exhausting as confronting the truth, but she doesn’t have to spend any time in jail or camping out in such places as Crawford, Texas—hiding ones head in the sand can be accomplished from the comfort of your own home.

I, too, want the eyes of young people to be opened, but to the fact that they kill and die for the crimes and lies of the ruling class and their sacrifices cause pain to themselves and so many others for the profit of a few. I want their eyes to be opened before they enlist to the horrors of war and the images of babies being born with deformities and illnesses because of depleted uranium and other toxins the US military spreads around the world with the cancer of imperialism.

I want young people to envision a future of peace and justice that isn’t wrought off of the deaths of millions of innocent people and the destruction of entire countries.

Besides, I can personally vouch for the truth that since my son died, my civil liberties and human rights have been eroded to the point of ridiculousness.

Peaceful protests are relegated to miles away from the people or events that are being opposed—I am sexually and emotionally molested every time I fly—I have been arrested many times for exercising my “freedom” to peaceably assemble or my “freedom” to speech—I have been followed and spied upon—I am being persecuted by the same US Attorney’s office that protects the Bush regime—and President Obama has given himself the right to imprison me (and you) without due process, or even murder me (and you) if he deems it necessary. Exactly what “freedoms” did my son sacrifice his young and valuable life for? We have freedom here in the US all right—the freedom to take our establishment medals and shut the f@*k up if you don’t support the Warfare State. Here in the US of A, we also can be “free” to be as DUMB as we want—just keeping watching that TV box.
People who support and defend the US Warfare State claim to know that my son is “rolling in his grave” because of my activism, but I knew him better than anyone on this planet and I was relieved and validated when I found out that Casey refused and then was forced to go on the mission that ended up killing him. I am so proud of him and the vets who throw their “Man Scout Badges” back at the Warfare State.

As the prophet, Jim Morrison, implied, we are afraid of true freedom and the responsibility that it brings. It’s so much easier to give our power away to the Warfare State and watch our world be eviscerated for its voracious appetite.

However, the best way to honor Casey and the millions who have died, or been slaughtered by the US Warfare State, is to reject the propaganda and work for true and lasting peace and the overthrow of that Warfare State by any non-violent means necessary. Only then will we be truly free.


Quigley writes: "Peace today is a nearly impossible challenge for the United States. Unless the US dramatically reduces its emphasis on global military action, there will be many, many more families grieving on future Memorial days."

READ MORE http://readersupportednews.org/opinion2/282-98/11629-focus-immemorial-day-no-peace-for-militarized-us

Honor the dead, heal the wounded, stop the war

IVAW feedback@ivaw.org via uark.edu 5-28-12 to jbennet

Dear James,

Honoring the dead and wounded (all of the dead and wounded)
On this Memorial Day, we honor all those lost and injured in war -- our wounded service members and those killed in action, the dead and injured Iraqi, Afghan, and Pakistani civilians, and the 18 veterans we lose to suicide every single day. We honor their lives by publicly sharing the human costs of war and by fighting for the right to heal from our military service.

We also remember all those in our larger military community inevitably affected by the violence of eleven years of war. The latest Army data shows that:

Violent sex crime was up 64 percent from 2006 to 2011

Domestic violence rose 33 percent from 2006 to 2011.

Child abuse rose 43 percent in the same time period.

We don't have these same statistics for Iraqi and Afghan communities.

Acting in defiance of war

Last week, we marched on the NATO Summit with Afghans For Peace. Then nearly 50 of us symbolically returned our medals to the heads of NATO, in defiance of the continuing 'global war on terror' that has traumatized us as well as Iraqi and Afghan families, has depleted the resources our government has to use at home, and has enriched the coffers of war profiteers.

Nathan Toth is one of the veterans who participated in that courageous act. Read his personal story and why he turned in his medals.

If you missed it last week, Democracy Now has devoted their entire Memorial Day broadcast to our NATO action.

Our commitment

Even though funding for our work has been more difficult to find over the past year, we've experienced an increase in membership. An average of 40 veterans and active duty service members are joining us every month. Our movement is growing, and we are not going away.

We are committed to ending our military's practice of deploying traumatized troops back into combat and fighting for veterans' and service members' right to heal.

We are committed to ending the war in Afghanistan and reducing our government's bloated military budget.

We are committed to developing ourselves as leaders in our continued struggle for social change, justice and peace.

Thank you for continuing to stand with us.
In Solidarity,

Iraq Veterans Against the War

Afghanistan Veterans Against the War Committee

1 http://www.va.gov/opa/speeches/2010/10_0111hold.asp;

   crimes-domestic-violence-1.166328

REMEMBER

Short Video

An alternative view of Memorial Day.
http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article31433.htm

The Horrors We Bless: Rethinking the Just-War Legacy

Daniel C. Maguire

Offers a third way to understand and think about war

SELLING POINTS

• Includes thoughtful quotes about war from many historical and contemporary sources

• Includes reflection and discussion questions for individual or small group use
Is war inevitable? Is it so woven into the fabric of our being that it always was and always will be? “Early Christians,” says Maguire, “were unanimous in opposing this view.” They didn’t see war as normal but an outrage and even a sacrilege. Maguire argues that later Christians succumbed to the supposed “normalcy” of war and developed what later became known as the “just-war theory,” which was actually devised as a deterrent to the rush to war.

In this provocative and helpful book, Maguire proposes that state-sponsored violence can only be justified in a community context with legal and internationally enforceable restrictions comparable to the restraints we put upon our police. This understanding of war would put an end to “vigilante war” practiced by Adolph Hitler and others as well as the “preemptive war” policy currently emerging in America. Maguire’s proposal brings clarity and hope to the conversation about war in contemporary times.

Contents

1. What Is War?

2. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Just-War Theory

3. War: Is It Necessary?

4. Violence: Is You Is or Is You Ain’t My Baby?

Daniel C. Maguire is Professor of Ethics at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Among his many books are A Moral Creed for All Christians (2005, 0-8006-3761-5), Sacred Energies: When the World’s Religions Sit Down to Talk about the Future (2000, 0-8006-3216-8) and Sacred Choices: The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Ten World Religions
Distinguished scholar Carl Boggs's brilliant historical survey of US empire-building...

*(James Petras, Bartle Professor Emeritus,)*

Carl Boggs's investigation is relentless, unflinching, and irrefutable. This book...

*(Michael Parenti, author of Against Empir)*

Americans think others commit war crimes. Not so many years...

*(George Katsiaficas)*

**The Crimes of Empire: Rogue Superpower and World Domination by [Carl Boggs](#). Pluto, 2010.**

Imperial Nations advance their own interests by exploiting other societies. To those on the receiving end this is obvious, while inside the empire, a powerful ideological system of justification tends to hide all but the worst excess.

Carl Boggs argues that that the US began life two centuries ago as a nascent colonialist regime plundering and conquering the Native Tribes. The Indian wars were followed by perpetual militarism and warfare fuelled by a deep sense of national exceptionalism. The Crimes Of Empire examines several trends in this process, and illustrates the new depths plumbed since 9/11.

Violation of international agreements, treaties and laws and the use of prohibited weapons, support for death squads and torture are just some of the practices that Boggs highlights as he shows how technical superiority and media control prolong the American nightmare.

**About The Author**


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More Anti-War Films

by Butler Shaffer

My previous article — suggesting a number of anti-war films to be watched over the Memorial Day weekend — generated more responses than most of my previous articles. Most of those who e-mailed me had one or two movies of their own to supplement my list. I also realized — after the article appeared — that I had inadvertently omitted two of my favorite anti-war films. The combination of personal embarrassment for these oversights and the quality of the motion pictures recommended by readers, has led to this addendum. As with my previous article, these films are rated on a personal preference scale of *, **, or ***, although I regard each as a worthy criticism of the war system. Each rated film is one I have seen, some of them only after having been praised by readers.

First, let me make mention of the two films I failed to mention earlier.

*** Why We Fight. A powerful documentary — in which Karen Kwiatkowski, Chalmers Johnson, and Gore Vidal carry most of the intellectual load — on the nature and history of the post—World War II American war-making system. It won the Grand Jury Prize at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival. WARNING! Do not confuse this with the pro-war series of the same name, produced during World War II by one of my un-favorite directors, Frank Capra.
**Children of Men.** A futuristic film set in an Orwellian England, where endless wars against endless enemies have become the norm. Throughout the world, most women have become infertile, threatening the extinction of the human species. A woman has become pregnant, and most of the film is taken up with trying to get her to a country that would harbor her and her unborn child. This is a very dark and violent film — someone is always in the process of killing others, bombing buildings, etc. What is encouraging, however, is that none of the warring factions are presented as “good” guys fighting the “bad” guys. It is the anti-life nature of the war system itself — with mankind as the endangered species — that dominates the movie.

**Breaker Morant.** A couple readers couldn't understand why I didn't include this Australian film on my list. I must admit that I considered it but, perhaps because a similar theme had been presented in the *Paths of Glory* film I had recommended, I left it off the list. Upon reflection, I think the readers had better judgment than I on this one. It is the story of Australian soldiers — during the Boer War — against whom phony murder charges are made in order to facilitate the political machinations of bringing the war to an end. It illustrates, quite well, how soldiers — treated by the state as nothing more than fungible resources for its exploitation — can be sacrificed both on and off the battlefield.

* Three Kings. Set in the first Gulf War, there is an abundance of the blood-bath that defines every war. What is of particular interest in this film, however, is the impact war has on the non-combatant refugees. A very nice ending from their perspective.

**Platoon** and **Full Metal Jacket.** These are potent films providing a soldier's perspective on the dehumanizing, life-destroying nature of war. As one who believes that the gore and broken bodies of those killed in wars should be regularly shown on television — so that the Sean Hannity's, the Rush Limbaugh's, the Bill O'Reilly's, et al., can get a snootful of the system they so adore — these films provide a good secondary source. *Platoon* won an Oscar for “best film.”

* Lord of War. This movie deals more with the underbelly of post—Cold War arms-trafficking
than with wars themselves (although there is plenty of blood-letting for any pro-war vampires). Pay attention to the credits following the film. They inform us that the five largest nations involved in selling arms to the rest of the world, are also the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council!

** A Very Long Engagement.** Perhaps, as a motion picture production, this is artistically the best film of all I have recommended. While set in wartime (World War I), with plenty of battlefield insanity, it is essentially a love story involving a young woman intent on finding her fiancé — is he alive or dead? — after the war. There is also a very interesting character; a prostitute bent on revenge against corrupt military officers.

** The Battle of Algiers.** A 1965 film done in a pseudo-documentary style, it dramatizes the decade-long struggle of Algerians against their French occupiers. This motion picture affords viewers insights into the current responses of Iraqis to their American occupiers.

** Duck Soup.** The Marx Brothers slapstick assault on the war system, with
Groucho — as Freedonia's prime minister — declaring war on a neighboring country for no apparent reason. My favorite line in the film is when, in the course of battle, Groucho tells the others that they are fighting for (Margaret Dumont's) “honor: which is probably more than she ever did.”

**Hearts and Minds.** Won an Oscar for best documentary. It deals with the events and machinations that led to the Vietnam War. No clearer example of the hypocrisy of the United States' alleged efforts to bring “freedom” to Southeast Asia is found than in the effort of the federal government to have this film formally censored so that Americans could not learn what their “representative” thugs had been up to.

**Grand Illusion.** A 1937 film by director Jean Renoir. I saw this motion picture so many years ago that it simply slipped my mind in writing my first article. An anti-war film focusing on the futility of the war system. That the German government tried to destroy this film when it first came out, provides some evidence of its importance.

**Das Boot** and **Letters From Iwo Jima.** Two films that address the horrors of warfare from the perspectives of those on the “other” side, the first Germans, the second Japanese. The latter is Clint Eastwood's highly-praised picture.

There are a number of other films readers recommended, some of which I have seen, some I have not. These include **The Lives of Others; Downfall; Kelly's Heroes; The Ground Truth; Iraq for Sale: The War Profiteers; When I Came Home; Come and See; No Man's Land; Born on the Fourth of July; The Razor's Edge** (1984 version); **Coming Home;** and **A Midnight Clear.** The latter film was reviewed at length by Rick Gee.

There are two documentaries that have just recently appeared: from “Bill Moyers Journal” **Buying the War.** The other is titled **SPIN: The Art of Selling War.** They each examine the role of the media in helping the state promote its war efforts. I have seen the former film, but not the latter.

Should you decide to conduct your own Anti-War Film Festival this forthcoming Memorial Day weekend, you might be interested in including a recitation of one of the most
powerful anti-war poems: Mark Twain's *The War Prayer*.

May 21, 2007

Butler Shaffer [send him e-mail] teaches at the Southwestern University School of Law. He is the author of *Calculated Chaos: Institutional Threats to Peace and Human Survival*.

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Butler Shaffer Archives

This newsletter continues OMNI’s NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL DAYS PROJECT. Half of the Project affirms nonviolent DAYs, such as Human Rights Day. The other half offers alternatives to violent, imperial, or generally misdirected days, as with the following:

Feb. 14: Standing on the Side of Love Day (formerly Valentine’s Day)

May, 2\(^{nd}\) Sunday: Julia Ward Howe’s Mother’s Day for Peace (Mother’s Day)

3\(^{rd}\) Sat. in May: Peace Forces Day (Armed Forces Day)

May, last Monday: Day of Mourning for Victims of Wars (Memorial Day)

June 14: Liberty and Justice for All Day (Flag Day)

June, 3\(^{rd}\) Sunday: Father’s Day for Peace (Father’s Day)

September 11 (9-11): Peaceful Tomorrows Day (Patriot Day)

Oct., 2\(^{nd}\) Monday: Indigenous Peoples Day (Columbus Day)

Nov. 11: World Unity Day (Veterans Day) (Or Armistice Day in 1918 when WWI ended)

November: Fourth Thursday: National Day of Gratitude and Atonement (Thanksgiving)
December 7: Pacific Colonial War Day (Pearl Harbor Day)

December 25: Love and Peacemaking Day (Christmas)

END VICTIMS OF US WARS DAY #5 2013

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