OMNI

VICTIMS OF WARS DAY (MEMORIAL DAY)


Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of PEACE, JUSTICE, AND ECOLOGY.

If we hope for change, we must change from war to peace. Alternative titles: MOURNING FOR VICTIMS OF WARS DAY, DAY OF MOURNING, IMMEMORIAL DAY. (Similarly, Veterans Day, Nov. 11, should be called ARMISTICE FOR ALL WARS DAY.)

VICTIMS OF WARS DAY NEWSLETTER LINKS
5. http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/2013/05/all-victims-of-us-wars-day-newsletter-5.html

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Veterans Organizations for Peace and the Poor People’s Campaign on What We Should Remember and Protest
VFP and Dick: Letters to the Wall against War and Speak Out against Militarism and the War Economy.
About Face (formerly IVAW): Militarism and Endless War.
Haymarket Press Books against War and Militarism.
David Swanson, *Curing Exceptionalism*
Dick: Media Promotion of War: the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, with one exception
Newsletter #7

VETERANS FOR PEACE Responds to “MEMORIAL DAY”
VETERANS FOR PEACE WEEKLY E-NEWS, May 3, 2018
Full Disclosure: Memorial Day

VFP’s Full Disclosure Memorial Day project continues as 2018 unfolds. In terms of the American War in Viet Nam, this year looms large — fifty years ago the Tet Offensive exploded; the infamous My Lai massacre took its devastating toll; Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated; and on and on. Perhaps a loved one of yours was caught up in the net of this murderous war or you were directly impacted yourself by the war.

Over the past few years we have laid 371 letters at the foot of The Wall in Washington, DC (the Vietnam Veterans Memorial) on consecutive Memorial Days. We plan on delivering more letters this coming Memorial Day. Will yours be one of them? We sure hope so. To view previous years’ letters, please check out this page of our website — or to order our special edition of collected letters THE LETTERS TO THE WALL.

If you are writing a letter for us to deliver this Memorial Day (May 28, 2018), please send your letter to rawlings@maine.edu before May 15th. Your letter will also be posted on our website prior to Memorial Day. Please note that the National Park Service collects each letter for their archival collection and may publicly display letters at a later date. We also plan on putting together another collection of letters using the 2017 and 2018 letters, so by submitting your letter to us, you are also giving us your permission to use it in these ways.

MY LETTER TO RAWLINGS 5-14-18

Arkansas’ state newspaper, the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, continues to glorify war and warriors. On May 14 it issued a call to “Honor the Military” by sending an account of gratitude for someone who died in service to our country in 300 words or fewer for publication.

We need a shift in moral consciousness. Nations continue to glorify their war dead and to pursue the militarism and preparation for war that this glorification engenders.

A counter-model for remembering the war dead exists, which is to remember and mourn for all who died in battles, not only your nation’s warriors, but those of the enemy, and all the civilians killed too. The cenotaph on the southern coast of Okinawa called the Cornerstone
of Peace (1995), composed of 114 monuments, honors the 200,000 people who lost their lives in the Battle of Okinawa. Inscribed on the monuments are not only the names of all the Japanese soldiers who died defending the island, but all the Okinawan residents killed in the fighting, the Korean and Taiwanese (mainly forced laborers), and the U.S. and British soldiers as well.

Instead of an exclusive nationalistic memorial that prepares for future war, through their inclusive Cornerstone of Peace the people of Okinawa “wish to make this land a bridge between nations.”

I have visited the Cornerstone of Peace. No other monument for peace has inspired me as persistently.

Dick Bennett, USAF (1954-6)
2582 Jimmie Ave.
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VETERANS FOR PEACE WEEKLY E-NEWS

Thursday, May 24th, 2018

**Poor People's Campaign Week 3 to Focus on Militarism**

On May 29th, VFP chapters will join with the Poor People's Campaign to speak out against militarism and the war economy.

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**Help get Vets to DC This Memorial Day!**

Shawna Foster, About Face: Veterans Against the War (formerly IVAW) 5-25-18  via uark.onmicrosoft.com

Dear Dick,

The Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for a Moral Revival continues! A week ago, leaders from *About Face: Veterans Against the War* were arrested with about 130 coalition members during the launch of 40 days of non-violent resistance. The state of **endless war** is so dire that we must put our bodies on the line, and though we’re heartened by our action last week, we know it can’t stop there.

*Please help us continue to mobilize our members to expose Militarism’s impact this Memorial Day!*

Just four days ago, more folks were arrested in the rotunda of the Capitol trying to get to their legislators’ offices to ask for the end of systemic racism as a key component connected to poverty. They demanded the reinstatement of the Voting Rights Act, automatic voter registration, the end of mass incarceration, justice for immigrants, and respect for indigenous peoples.

As veterans, we understand how systemic racism also upholds the Military-Industrial-
Complex in countless ways:

- The Mexican-American border is being increasingly militarized, making it another area of profit for private contractors. At Trump’s whim 700 National Guard Troops have been deployed to the border last month.

- Racist policing practices and mass incarceration against African-Americans and communities of color bear great resemblance to US military occupations abroad and their tactics.

- American taxpayers purchase weapons to use against poor, majority black and brown people overseas, and with the 1033 program, sell or give those weapons to police here in America. The weapons used on the streets of Baghdad are literally the same weapons used on the streets of Ferguson. The weapons used in Syria and Yemen are the same weapons police departments used to target water protectors at Standing Rock.

- Racist propaganda is used to justify wars; in today’s wars, that racism looks like Islamophobia.

Next week, the campaign will focus specifically on militarism and its links to racism, pollution, and poverty. An even bigger group of About Face members are mobilizing to their capitals and to Washington, DC to demand that our congressional budget be spent on the needs of the people, not on endless war.

 Donate to make it possible for us to take action this Memorial Day, from travel funds to bail money!

Thank you for supporting this campaign and the veterans’ voices in it. Together, I believe that we will win.

In solidarity, Rev. Shawna Foster
Board Secretary, About Face Veterans Against the War
(fomerly Iraq Veterans Against the War)

About Face: Veterans Against the War is a 501(c)(3) charity, and welcomes your tax deductible contributions

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NEW BOOKS FOR A RECONSTITUTED MEMORIAL DAY 2018

Haymarket Books 5-25-18
info@haymarketbooks.org via mail128.suw18.rsgsv.net
Curing Exceptionalism PDF

Curing Exceptionalism: What’s wrong with how we think about the United States? What can we do about it? (April, 2018) — U.S. exceptionalism, the idea that the United States of America is superior to other nations, is no more fact-based and no less harmful than racism, sexism, and other forms of bigotry. The purpose of this book is to persuade you of that statement. This book examines how the United States actually compares with other countries, how people think about the comparison, what damage that thinking does, and what changes we might want to consider making. “I hope Curing Exceptionalism will be part of coursework in classrooms throughout the U.S.” —Kathy Kelly, co-coordinator of Voices for Creative Nonviolence. “A must-read for every U.S. citizen.” —Robert Fantina, author of Desertion and the American Soldier 1776-2006.

$10.00 – Purchase

CHALLENGING US MEDIA PROMOTION OF WAR AND EMPIRE

NADG PROMOTING MILITARISM AS USUAL 2018
“Honor the Military.” NADG 5-14-18
“In two weeks, we’ll commemorate those who died in service to our country. Is there someone you always remember on Memorial Day? …tell us about it in 300 words or fewer, and we’ll do our best to get it in the Memorial Day edition.” [The paper published 7 letters May 28.]

THE ARKANSAS-DEMOCRAT GAZETTE REPORTS “MEMORIAL DAY 2016” by Dick Bennett

I count six direct items on US killed while engaged in US wars, Monday, May 30, 2016. The days leading up to this day witnessed many more celebratory essay, reports, and photos. Editorial, “Memorial Day 2016, Attention and Present Arms.”


Two reports of public activities:


Scarlet Sims, “Horn Players Set to Honor Veterans Today: Families Say Taps Important Part of Memorial Day Events.”

Two cartoons:

One showing the ghost of a fully armed soldier walking away from us holding the hand of a little boy, with this message: “Never forget the Price of Freedom.”

The other depicts Uncle Sam, hat in left hand, right hand over heart, mournful countenance, looking at a tombstone with “Veteran” engraved upon it underneath the US Seal, accompanied by a small US flag.

I won’t comment on them, having analyzed similar pieces for seven years. The introduction to my 2015 Newsletter with web site follows, if you wish to read more, and I urge you to examine the six pieces above on your own. Here is an opportunity to practice your critical thinking skills.

But these six represent only part of the AD-G’s relatively speaking prodigious effort on Monday, May 30, 2016 to get us in line for future wars. Five items not directly about “Memorial Day” also support war.

Essay by regular columnist Charles Krauthammer, “The Arrow of History.” The only thing about Obama he likes is his efforts for “containment of China,” the lessons of the Cold War against the Soviet Union unlearned

“Let’s Build a Memorial,” guest editorial by Arkansas native Joe Weishaar, designer of the National World War I Memorial in Washington, DC, extolling WWI and the US troops who fought to defend “their towns, states and country,” and urging readers to donate to the construction fund. (Few claims in this embarrassing essay will withstand close examination.)
Three news reports:
“Trump Fires Up Veterans at Rally: by AD-G Staff from wire reports. “'We’re going to knock the hell out of' Isis, he declared, as if a natural conclusion for US foreign policy, and “the line drew some of the loudest applause of the day from the crowd.”


Frank Lockwood’s report, “Senate Oks Naming Perryville Post Office After Slain POW,” condemning former enemy Vietnam for a “wanton act of murder” of Perryville Army Staff Sgt. Harold George Bennett during the Vietnam War. (I.e., No article during these Memorial Days condemns the US for invading and then killing at least two million Vietnamese.)

One Exception
The newspaper includes one photo and article urging critical thinking regarding war-making: “Battle of Verdun Remembered” and “France, Germany Show Unity at WWI Site.” German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Francois Hollande “pay their respects” at France’s Douaumont Ossuary “to mark 100 years since the Battle of Verdun,” which “killed 163,000 French and 148,000 German soldiers.” The commemorations “were focused on educating youth about the horrors and consequences of the war.” Merkel said “the dead of Verdun were ‘victims of bigotry and nationalism, of blindness and political failure.’” The lessons from all the “catastrophes of the 20th Century” bring us “to recognize how necessary it is not to seal ourselves off but to be open to each other.” But this lesson the arrogant enforcers of US exceptionalism will not learn from a foreigner.

Remembering Victims of US Violence and Wars #7
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/2015/05/victims-of-wars-day-memorial-day.html
(This newsletter has two parts: 1) Senator Cotton's effusively patriotic letter and my commentaries on federal cemeteries, PBS, and the newspaper, and 2) my vision of a Memorial Day for our other heroes killed in line of duty who were not seeking to kill others.)
The Empire’s Memorial Day
Letter from Senator Cotton
Dick: Fayetteville’s National Cemetery Memorial Day 2015
Dick: PBS Celebrates the Troops, but……Not the FBI
Dick: The Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette Commemorates the Day
Veterans for Peace Remembers the Vietnam War

Another Memorial Day for the People
Memorial Day 2015 Google Search
Workers Killed in Line of Duty
Teachers Killed in School Shootings, Google Search
Teachers Killed in the Line of Duty, Google Search
Firemen Killed in Line of Duty, Google Search
Workers Memorial Day, April 28
President’s Proclamation
AFL-CIO

END DAY OF MOURNING NEWSLETTER #8, MAY 2018

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