



THE FOGHORN NEWS

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



Remembering Nico

by Robert Hepburn

I spent my first three months in Viet Nam as a United States' Marine in 3rd Shore Party Battalion, 3rd Marine Division on a base just southwest of Danang in 1967.

There was a shantytown called Dogpatch set up there to serve US Marines and Navy Seabees. The rice paddies around Dogpatch had been bombed and sprayed with Agent Orange and other

See page 3: "Nico"



The words 'Love to live - Live to love' border Robert Hepburn's tattoo of Nico, whom he lost contact with while in Viet Nam as a US Marine, see story on the left. He got the tattoo in 1969 in downtown Los Angeles.

The Extradition of Anti-War Journalist Julian Assange

by Shawn Leon

Professor Nils Melzer, U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture, said at first he didn't believe Wikileaks co-founder Julian Assange deserved his support, but "In the end it finally dawned on me that I had been blinded by propaganda, and that Assange had been systematically slandered to divert attention from the crimes he exposed."

A UK court ruled January

See page 2: "Extradition"



Army Whistleblower and Veteran Chelsea Manning, above, risked her life to leak US war crimes to the public via Wikileaks, an anti-war publisher of secret documents. President Obama's administration prosecuted Manning, and then pardoned her after almost seven years in prison. Wikileaks co-founder Julian Assange, foreign journalist and asylee, now faces extradition to the US on Espionage Act charges totaling a 175-year maximum sentence.

JAN/FEB 2021

USA Pretend Unmasked: Viet Nam Epiphany for the USA

by S. Brian Willson

There was a moment in Viet Nam when I questioned whether everything I had been taught about "America" was one big fabricated lie—a huge pretend. It was April 1969, and I had just experienced witnessing the aftermath of a series of bombings of supposed mili-

See page 8: "Epiphany"

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The opinions expressed in The Foghorn News are those of the author(s) and may not reflect the opinions of the Editor or the Humboldt Bay Chapter of Veterans For Peace.

Veterans For Peace Invites You to Join

Veterans For Peace, Inc., (VFP) is an international organization of men and women veterans of all eras, many of whom served in Viet Nam, the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and other military conflicts.

VFP was founded in 1985 as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit educational and humanitarian organization. Since then it has become an international organization with members in all 50 states as well as chapters in Ireland, London, Mexico, Okinawa (Japan) and Viet Nam. VFP is the only veteran organization to hold a permanent Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) seat at the United Nations and it is

Extradition: (From page 1)

4th Assange is not psychologically fit to face extradition to the United States, as he is a suicide risk, but endorsed the US prosecutor's legal theory that effectively criminalizes journalistic activity anywhere in the world. The US intends to appeal the ruling. The UK denied Assange bail despite rejecting the extradition request based on Assange's deteriorated mental state related to his confinement.

Amnesty International put out the statement: "We welcome the fact that Julian Assange will not be sent to the USA, but this does not absolve the UK from having engaged in this politically-motivated process at the behest of the USA and putting media freedom and freedom of expression on trial."

the first military veterans' organization invited to be a member of the International Peace Bureau based in Geneva, Switzerland. National conventions are held annually and members communicate through quarterly newsletters as well as daily list-serve news and alerts, online discussion groups, and the national and many chapter web sites.

Veterans For Peace Statement of Purpose

We, as military veterans, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work, with others both nationally and internationally:

- To increase public awareness of the causes and costs of war

- To restrain our government from intervening, overtly or covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations

- To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons

- To seek justice for veterans and victims of war

- To abolish war as an instrument of national policy

To achieve these goals, members of Veterans For Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.

Veterans For Peace Objective:

We draw on our personal experiences and perspectives gained as veterans to raise public awareness of the true costs and consequences of militarism and war - and to seek peaceful, effective alternatives.

Join Us:

We encourage all veterans, family members and supporters to join us in creating a global culture of peace and non-violence.

For the national VFP Newsletter go to:
veteransforpeace.org



The extradition case is widely viewed as a global landmark event that threatens press freedom, purportedly enshrined in the 1st Amendment to the US Constitution, since the precedent would expand the scope of the Espionage Act to silence dissent anywhere in the world.

Assange faces 175 years in prison if convicted in a quasi judicial Espionage Court in Alexandria, Virginia.

Wikileaks, a global repository of leaked documents exposing war crimes, cults, and corrupt politicians, was designed by Assange with computer security in mind to keep the site online, free to the global public, even when

powerful people want to take it down.

Wikileaks' sophisticated security has preserved leaks, and triggered citizen rebellions that toppled corrupt US backed governments making Wikileaks, and Assange, an enemy of the rich, powerful, and corrupt.

The database has the potential to transform western neo-colonial thought as journalists, university departments, and the public examine the leaks' primary source material and expose the gears of the war economy, offering a rare account of what the US military does with nearly half of every US tax dollar.

See Page 7: "Extradition"

THE FOGHORN NEWS CALENDAR



WEEKLY EVENTS:

**Thursday 3pm (PST)
Veterans For Peace
Social Hour!:**

To join go to Zoom and click join meeting and enter in Meeting ID: 324 812 650

Local Weekly Veterans For Peace Vigils:

Arcata: Fridays 4:30-5pm VFP 56 members and others stand silently for a Peace Vigil on the southwest corner of the Arcata Plaza, 8th & H Streets, in Arcata.

Eureka: Fridays 5-6pm VFP 56 members and others stand silently for a

Peace Vigil in front of the Humboldt County Courthouse on the corner of 5th & I Streets in Eureka.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Jan 7 + Feb 4: VFP Truth in Military Recruitment working group: register here: <http://bit.ly/TIRCalls>

Jan 10, 24 + Feb 7 + 21: Be the Change Book Club: Sign up at: www.veteransforpeace.org

Jan 20: US Presidential Inauguration

Jan 22: Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons comes into

force: 50 member states have signed, not yet including any main nuclear powers, such as the USA. For more info: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/10/1076082>

Mar 1: Castle Bravo Day: The 66th anniversary of Castle Bravo, the largest thermonuclear device ever detonated by the US. For more info: www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2014/02/27/castle-bravo-the-largest-u-s-nuclear-explosion/

CLOTHING DONATION:

Arthur McDonald distributes clothing and toiletries to veterans and others in need. If you

have any clean and smoke-free clothing you would like to donate, please call Arthur at 707-630-2124 or Gordy at 707-499-1029 or email Gordy at: butsushu@gmail.com Pick ups can be arranged or leave items at Arthur's house at: 2150 McKinleyville Ave. McKinleyville, CA 95519

CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:

Chapter Meetings are on the First Thursday of each month, 7-9pm, at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Bayside.

Nico: (From page 1)

herbicides. Because of this, the only income the villagers got besides from giving haircuts and doing laundry was from prostitution and selling strong marijuana and opium to US troops.

I met Nico two weeks into my tour in the Viet Nam War on my first guard duty at a guard station in front of my base. She was the leader of five other younger women who came out from Dogpatch to serve us sexually for money. I was 19 years old at the time and Nico was 30 years old. She was slender, with long silky black hair, dark eyes and I thought a very pretty face. She was taller than the other women, which I now

think was because she was part French. I never found out Nico's last name.

Nico picked me out from the other troops and said to me—"you want boom-boom?"

I paid her five dollars in Military Payment Certificates, or MPCs, that she could spend on the local "black market." She called me "Number One"—the best. There were two bombed out pagodas, tall multi-tiered shrines, in the rice paddies beyond our perimeter which we called "big pagoda" and "little pagoda." This is where we went on patrol.

It was at the "big pagoda" where I met Nico and the other women again. This time Nico wanted my gold-plated wristwatch which I explained didn't work, but she wanted it

anyway. She again called me Number One and in her broken English let me know that she liked me. She told me that "we boom-boom for free now" and with that I became her boyfriend. At this time, she asked me if I could get "Kools" for her and I said I could. The Vietnamese went crazy over the 'menthol' in Kool cigarettes and paid big money for them on the black market.

The next time I met up with Nico I brought her two cartons of Kools which made her very happy. Around this time, I had become a "cook striker," an apprentice cook in the Marines, and I was put in charge over the local Vietnamese mamasons, middle-aged to old Vietnamese women, who

worked in the kitchen. Word got out on the local Dogpatch grapevine that I was Nico's boyfriend and that I gave out to the momasons the extra food that would have been thrown away in the garbage. I became quite popular with the local Vietnamese; so much so, that the wife of the local "Arvan Captain" of the South Vietnamese Army wove me a beautiful blue "smoking jacket," a man's gown worn when relaxing after dinner, that the Captain personally gave to me in appreciation. I put it away to save as a gift for my father back home.

It was around this time that I found out that Nico used some of the money

See page 6: Nico

Covid-19 catch-22: Regime-change policies come packed with US pandemic relief

by Alexander Rubinstein and Jeb Sprague
Article originally ran in The Greyzone on December 22nd, 2020.

The US Congress' \$900 billion Covid-19 relief bill was packaged with \$1.4 trillion in omnibus spending that includes tens of billions for war, weapons, and regime change abroad, from anti-Russia and anti-China initiatives to \$3.3 billion for Israel's military.

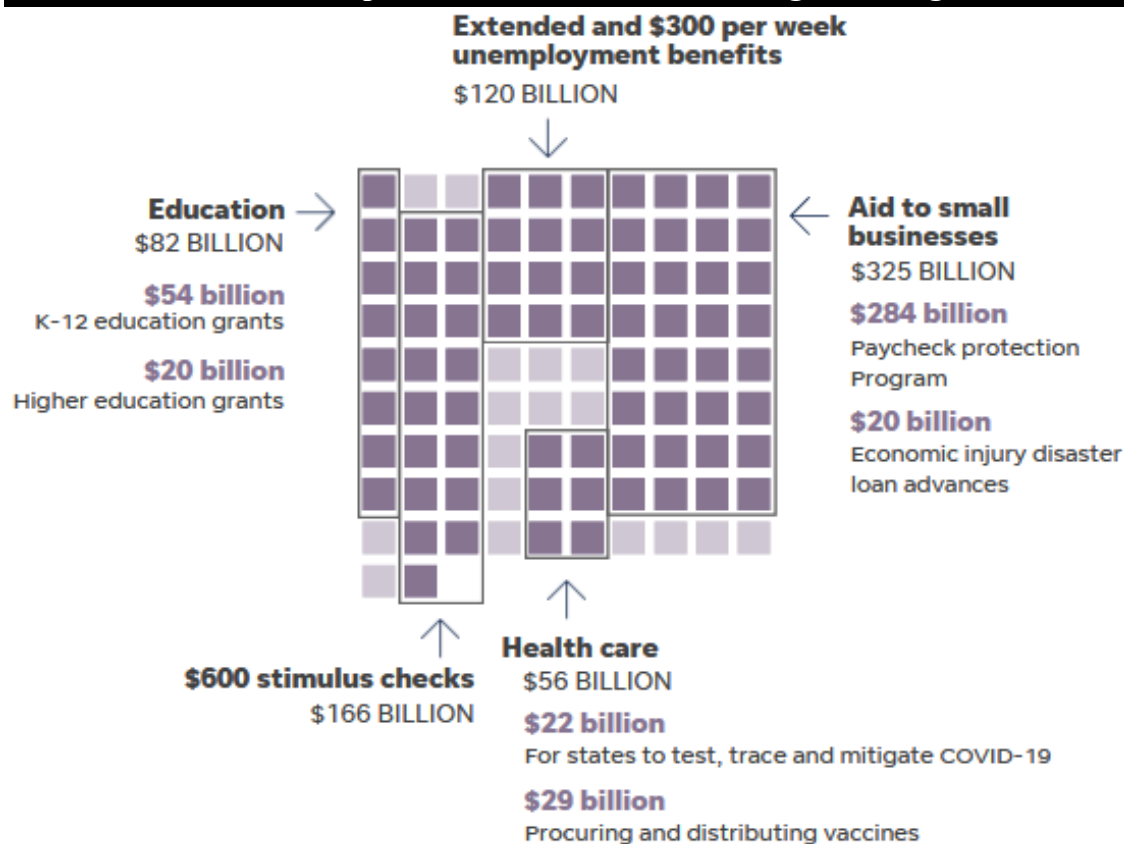
The longest piece of legislation in United States history, containing both a coronavirus relief package and the annual omnibus spending package, quickly passed through Congress on December 22, with little opposition. While technically separate bills, the omnibus and stimulus were debated and passed together, at the same time.

The massive piece of legislation — a staggering 5,593 pages in length — lays bare the priorities of the US government, prioritizing regime change in foreign nations and the imperatives of empire over the basic needs of Americans.

In just a few hours, it passed through the House of Representatives by 359-53, and through the Senate by 92-6.

While the US public was forced to grovel for months for a \$600 direct payment, the same piece of legislation pumps billions of dollars into

Photo diagram of Covid-19 stimulus bill from USA Today. The lions share of the \$900 billion emergency relief bill goes toward businesses, with less put aside for stimulus checks and unemployment benefits combined. The attached annual omnibus bill, at \$1.4 trillion, puts aside tens of billions for regime change, and war.



“democracy programs” — US government code for regime-change operations via civil society NGOs — and foreign military assistance. The measly \$600 survival checks pale in comparison to the massive foreign spending on regime change and titanic allocations to prop up US-friendly authoritarian militaries.

On so-called “Democracy Programs” alone, the legislation appropriates \$2.417 billion, and \$6.175 billion on the “Foreign Military Financing Program.” Another \$112.9 million is appropriated for “International Military Education and Training.”

\$6 billion more is allocated toward the domestic procurement of US Air Force missiles and US Navy weapons of war. This is

in addition to the \$740 billion defense bill passed earlier in December.

By contrast, the stimulus package comes at a value of \$900 billion, with the largest portion devoted to business bailouts.

The Federal News Network reports that the \$1.4 trillion omnibus includes \$671.5 billion allocated to “base defense spending,” with another \$77 billion going to “overseas contingency operations.”

Stimulating regime change and intervening in the Global South

The legislation stipulates: “\$300,000,000 shall be made available for a Countering Chinese Influence Fund to counter the malign influence of the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Chinese Com-

munist Party and entities acting on their behalf globally.”

In Hong Kong, where CIA cutout the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) has given financial support to activist groups leading riots that rocked the city for months on end, the United States is now devoting \$3 million for local destabilization efforts, including “internet freedom,” activists’ legal fees, and “democracy programs.”

Similarly, the legislation devotes \$8 million to NGOs for activities in Tibet or to support the Tibetan government-in-exile. It appears that, every fiscal year between 2021 and 2025, it allows for the additional appropriation of \$8 million per year to sup-

port Tibetan communities in Tibet, as well as \$6 million per year to support them in Nepal and India, and another \$3 million per year for “Tibetan governance.”

The bill also allocates \$3.3 million for the US government-backed media outlet Voice of America, and \$4 million to the similarly operated Radio Free Asia every year between fiscal years 2021 and 2025, in order “to provide uncensored news and information in the Tibetan language to Tibetans, including Tibetans in Tibet.”

In perhaps the most bizarre appeal to a regime-change activist lobby, an entire section of the bill is devoted to defining US policy “regarding the succession or reincarnation of the Dalai Lama.”

The bill also directs the secretary of state to establish a US consulate in Tibet.

Meanwhile, aid to a number of countries is conditioned on their taking part in Washington’s economic aggression. For example, \$85.5 million in assistance to Cambodia is contingent on it “taking effective steps” to enforce “international sanctions with respect to North Korea,” and “assert[ing] its sovereignty against interference by the People’s Republic of China.”

As for Latin America, the legislation stipulates that “not less than \$33,000,000 shall be made available for democracy programs for Venezuela.” By contrast, the legislation appropriates \$461.3 million for Colombia, a country which has seen massacre after massacre and scores of political assassi-

nations — with more than 290 human rights activists killed in 2020 alone.

While 20 percent of the funds are not releasable until Colombia shows it is “taking effective steps to hold accountable perpetrators of gross violations of human rights in a manner consistent with international law,” given Washington’s record in the country, it will likely give the green light regardless of the facts on the ground.

Globally, \$70 million is made available to support “internet freedom,” with an additional \$2.5 million potentially available “to surge Internet freedom programs in closed societies.”

Meanwhile, a Ronald Reagan-inspired program aimed at expanding US influence and the “war on drugs” in the Caribbean, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, is being given a \$74.8 million injection.

In Zimbabwe, where former President Robert Mugabe passed away in 2017, the government is still not off the hook. The legislation states: “The Secretary of the Treasury shall instruct the United States executive director of each international financial institution to vote against any extension by the respective institution of any loan or grant to the Government of Zimbabwe.” This language is aimed at depriving the cash-strapped African nation of international relief.

\$15 million is going toward “democracy programs” in South Sudan, while \$60m is being repurposed away from the “Global War on Terrorism” and “made available

for assistance for Sudan”. In central Africa, \$325 million is being earmarked for assistance to Congo, with some part of this appearing to be intermingled with “peacekeeping” operations.

The phantom Russian menace

With \$453 million appropriated for assistance to Ukraine, \$290 million for “countering Russia,” \$173 million for NATO, and \$132 million for NATO ally Georgia, the legislation comes close to appropriating a billion dollars toward new cold war policies against Moscow.

The rationale for this spending may be the re-emergence of an old menace; a hint buried more than 5,000 pages into the document states that it is US policy “to not recognize any incorporation of Belarus into a ‘Union State’ with Russia, since this so-called ‘Union State’ would be both an attempt to absorb Belarus and a step to reconstituting the totalitarian Soviet Union.”

In one striking example of how hell-bent the legislation’s authors are on regime change and confronting Russia, the following phrase appears verbatim nine times: “The Government of Belarus, led illegally by Alyaksandr Lukashenka.”

The legislation also demands a report from the director of national intelligence, the secretary of state, and the secretary of treasury that identifies all of Lukashenka’s assets and those of his family, plus “identification of the most significant senior

foreign political figures in Belarus, as determined by their closeness to Alyaksandr Lukashenka.”

The insistence on such information seems aimed at fast-tracking a list of entities to impose sanctions, in an effort to destabilize the country and make it ripe for a takeover by the US- and EU-backed opposition leader Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, whose name appears six times in the legislation.

Along with detailed attention on cyber activities in Belarus, the bill explains how US officials will put together a comprehensive strategy and cost estimate for carrying out various operations aimed at the country, one of which includes: “Expand independent radio, television, live stream, and social network broadcasting and communications in Belarus to provide news and information, particularly in the Belarusian language, that is credible, comprehensive, and accurate.”

Middle East madness

As the incoming administration of President-elect Joe Biden has promised not to condition aid to Israel in any circumstance, including potential annexation of the West Bank, Congress has rushed to pump the apartheid regime full of fresh cash.

Of the \$6.1 billion appropriated for funding foreign militaries, a whopping \$3.3 billion — more than half — “shall be available for grants only for Israel,” and must be “disbursed within 30 days

See page 11: “Regime Change”

that she and the other women made by selling their bodies to buy rice on the black market. This rice would be given to the masons to distribute to the hungry children and elders of Dogpatch. Around this time, I got it into my head that I wanted to marry Nico and bring her home, "stateside," back to the US at the end of my Viet Nam War tour.

I visited Sergeant Guy, my platoon leader and told him I wanted to marry a local Vietnamese woman named Nico and bring her stateside with me. He immediately asked me if I had mentioned this to anyone else and when I said no, he told me not to tell anyone, as I could be "court-martialled," disciplined, for "fraternizing with the enemy!" He told me that Nico was well-known among the military brass and was suspected of being a "Vietcong Sympathizer," meaning an enemy sympathizer.

A few days later I was diagnosed with "the clap," Gonorrhea. It took several weeks of treatment with antibiotics before I got well. During this time, I had not seen Nico.

Then, without warning I was sent up north on an operation near Phú Bài, in Hương Thủy, a Vietnamese town far away from Dogpatch and Nico. There was no time to say goodbye. It was there on operation, outside Phú Bài, that I saw atrocities like hanging Vietnamese from helicopters by various body parts for interrogation purposes.

One incident, directly hit me personally and made



A pagoda in Da Nang, Vietnam, from the region where Robert Hepburn met Nico in 1967 while in the US Marines. Photo from Pixabay.

an indelible mark on my soul.

The day before, several masons had gotten too close to our perimeter and were blown apart by our M-60 gunners, heavy artillery machine guns. Early in the morning several young Vietnamese attacked our wire with their bare hands and were also shot by our M-60 gunners. There was one young Vietnamese man on his back and bleeding head to foot who was asking for "Nook," for water, with his last dying breaths.

The Navy medics were standing around him, pouring water on the ground from their canteens and spitting. I remember yelling, "He's a human being," and trying to give him water from my canteen, however I was pulled back by other Marines. I remember being called a "commie" and "Vietcong lover."

Later that evening several Marines came to my "hootch" tent, a six-person tent on base, and all I re-

member was the butt-end of an M-16 rifle coming toward my head. The next morning I gained consciousness in the back of a truck on the way to a field hospital. I was there three days and then shipped up north to Đông Hà, a town near the demilitarized zone between North and South Viet Nam. In Đông Hà there were mortar and rocket attacks night and day.

Whenever a troop came through from down south, I asked about Nico. First I was told that she died from a sexually transmitted disease, which I did not believe. Then I was told that she had died when the US military clinic refused to treat her appendicitis and her appendix burst.

Then in January 1968, the Tet Offensive began, and Hue, the ancient and spiritual capital of Vietnam, was over-run by the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong.

I was sent to guard an ammo-dump in a suburb

of Huế. Only one rocket hit was needed to blow us all sky-high, but we were left alone in a little triangle, while the battle raged around us. I remember hearing orders given in Vietnamese.

A few days later, when The Vietnamese had retreated, I was sent back to Đông Hà to wait for my departure back home.

To me, Nico was a heroine for the people of Dogpatch. I will always remember Nico. She lives in my heart.

Since leaving Vietnam I've wondered if Nico is still alive, especially now since I've gotten old. She would be about 84-years-old now. I think I might go back to Dogpatch and look for her in 2022. ■

Robert Hepburn is a US Marine veteran, deployed to the war in Viet Nam, and a founding member of Veterans For Peace Humboldt Bay, (VFP Ch. 56).

Collateral Murder Leak

Collateral Murder, a video from a US Helicopter in Iraq, hit global audiences via Wikileaks on April 5th, 2010, and included the murder of two Reuters journalists, and Iraqi civilians, including the driver of a rescue vehicle, thus exposing multiple war crimes and US disregard for their own rules of engagement.

Army Private and research analyst Chelsea Manning leaked the video and a massive archive of military documents—one of the biggest leaks in human history. Manning choose to come forward publically as the leaker after a personal friend betrayed her confidentiality. When captured by authorities, she didn't cave to pressure. She came out as a transgender woman. Manning's 35-year sentence was reduced by President Obama, who originally prosecuted her, and she was released after 7 years, only to be jailed by a grand jury for 62 days, while recovering from gender transition surgery, for refusing to provide additional information to a federal grand jury.

“Rape” Allegations Amidst an International Manhunt

Four months after the Collateral Murder leak, in

August 2010, Assange's bank account was frozen in order to silence Wikileaks, forcing him to rely on the hospitality of supporters as he evaded a multi-million dollar international manhunt, partially exposed by Wikileaks in leaks from the Texas based intelligence company Stratfor.

As the manhunt against Assange intensified, in August 2010, Assange was in Sweden at a crayfish and beer party, a Swedish traditional event called *kräftskiva*. The host, identified as AA, wanted Assange to stay the night, according to two police witness statements, but Assange stayed with another woman, identified as SW. When the two women exchanged stories later, AA proposed they visit her police friend so the two women could get Assange to take a sexually transmitted disease test since they both claimed unprotected consensual sex occurred.

When AA took SW to see Swedish prosecutors the story was immediately leaked to the press—prosecutors changed SW's testimony without her consent to claim rape had occurred. SW wrote to a friend while at the police station that she hadn't wanted him to be charged with anything, but they were trying to get “their hands on him.”

Professor Nils Melzer, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, said, “I speak fluent Swedish and was thus able to read all of the original documents. I could hardly believe my eyes: According to the testimony of [SW] a rape had never even taken place at all. And not only that: The woman's testimony was later changed by the Stockholm police without her involvement in order to somehow make it sound like a possible rape.”

In a Twitter-message of 22 April 2013, AA herself publicly denied having been raped (*jag har inte blivit våldtagen*).“

Assange left for the UK after getting clearance to travel from investigators, but after he left, Sweden sent out an Interpol red notice, a global crime alert. An analyst from Stratfor, a US intelligence firm, wrote on an internal chat focused on taking Assange down: “Charges of sexual assault rarely are passed through Interpol red notices, like this case, so this is no doubt about trying to disrupt Wikileaks release of government documents.”

Assange offered to answer the investigators' questions through video link, but said he would not return to Sweden unless he was given assurance that he would not be extradited on to the US. Swedish prosecutors refused to

give that assurance. He then gained asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London on the grounds that he was in danger of being extradited to the US to face charges for journalistic activity. The UK refused to honor Assange's asylum status, and so he was arbitrarily detained in the embassy, according to the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention in an operation that cost UK taxpayers many millions in British pounds.

Now with the Swedish investigation closed without charges ever being filed, the US is working to set a legal precedent that will have a profound impact on the world for generations to come.

Hillary Clinton Corruption Exposed in 2016

Democratic Party operatives, and the CIA have publicly accused Wikileaks of getting a trove of emails from Russia regarding corrupt practices of US Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton during the 2016 US presidential race. But after a two year FBI investigation into the matter, costing \$35 million, which declined to interview Assange, no hard evidence has yet been produced to confirm these authentic documents came through Russia, which Assange claimed were leaked by a non-state actor. ■

Shawn Leon, Freelance Journalist and Editor at The Foghorn News, can be reached at: shawnleon33@gmail.com

EXCERPT OF WIKILEAKS PUBLICATIONS: ONE OUT OF 15 YEARS

[26 March 2010](#): CIA report into shoring up Afghan war support in Europe

[5 April 2010](#): Collateral Murder: video of civilians & journalists in Baghdad

[25 July 2010](#): 91,000 classified documents: Afghan War Diaries – 2004-2010

[22 October 2010](#): 391,000 reports: Iraq War Logs – 2004-2009

[28 November 2010](#): 250,000 US diplomatic cables: Cablegate – 1966-2010



DON'T THANK ME FOR MY SERVICE:

My Viet Nam Awakening to the Long History of US Lies

S. Brian Willson



Essay author S. Brian Willson's latest book, *Don't Thank Me For My Service: My Viet Nam Awakening to the Long History of US Lies*.

Epiphany: (From page 1)

tary targets. They were in fact inhabited, undefended villages where virtually everyone in those villages perished from low flying bombings, that included napalming. The majority of dead—murdered—were young burned children. On several occasions I observed those bodies up close, sickened by the sight, now burdened by the criminal nature of the US war. The policy of accumulating massive numbers of body counts was an inkling of the Grand Lie. Reading the entrance sign to my squadron in-country headquarters, “Welcome to Indian Country,” was a first clue.

My duty station was the “home” of the fighter-

bombers and pilots who followed orders to destroy those “enemy targets”, i.e., villages. I was the USAF night security commander following orders to protect those soldiers and planes from mortar and sapper attacks.

A few days later I was reading an article in Stars and Stripes, an official, independent newspaper for soldiers, reporting on a recent Supreme Court decision (Street v. New York, 1969) that upheld the right of desecrating our “sacred” symbol—the US flag. During a period of increased burnings of the US American flag in protests of the US wars against African Americans at home, and Asians abroad, an African American veteran recipient of a

Bronze Star, Sidney Street, publicly burned his personal flag on a New York City street corner for which he was arrested and convicted.

Depressed, I pondered how it is that one could be arrested for burning a piece of cloth—even a national symbol—that represented an official policy of criminally burning innocent human beings, including large numbers of young children, while the pilot-perpetrators were commended, and whom, in my duties I was protecting? Initially suicidal, I had difficulty wrapping my head around this dystopian nightmare. I was in psychic shock from extreme cognitive dissonance.

Our behavior against the Vietnamese, a nation of peasants with one-sixth the population of the USA, one-thirtieth its size, certainly must rank as one of the worst of a number of barbarisms in the 20th Century. The US left 26 million bomb craters, sprayed 21 million gallons of DNA-altering chemical warfare on the landscape and people, murdered some 6 million Southeast Asians, destroyed by bombing over 13,000 of Viet Nam's 21,000 villages, 950 churches and pagodas, 350 clearly marked hospitals, 3,000 high schools and universities, 15,000 bridges, etc.

Why all this overwhelming firepower and destruction? Incredulously, to prevent the Vietnamese from enjoying their self-determination, absurdly touted as necessary to stop “communism.” Does there in fact exist a kind of psy-

chopathy in our cultural DNA? Though I hadn't fired a bullet myself, or dropped a bomb, I had been a compliant participant in a mindless murder machine. Viet Nam was not an aberration, but consistent with a long history of arrogant interventions revealing something very dark about who we are. Was I part of a savage culture of unthinking sadists, I wondered?

Learning Real People's Versus Fake, Kool Aid US History

I have spent countless hours studying a more comprehensive people's version of world and US history. Study of US history of course is part of the Eurocentric globalization/colonization over the past 500 years. The 20 percent Eurocentric “developed-world” is a product of self-proclaimed “superiors” violently and deceitfully stealing resources and labor from the other 80 percent, all cloaked in the conceited rhetoric of spreading “civilization.” This patriarchal policy is totally unsustainable from a social, political, ecological, psychological, and moral perspective.

It is instructive to learn that the “Founding Fathers” chose, not democracy, but oligarchy/plutocracy “to protect the minority of the opulent against the majority.” Jefferson's “empire of liberty” was a vision to expand private property for large landowners. Our Constitution is more a document to preserve freedom of “property” and commercial transactions, than it is to preserve human liberty,

of which free speech is the most fundamental. Historian Staughton Lynd summarized it thus: inherited land replaced inherited government. Recently the highest court of the land ruled the legal fiction that property (money) is a person with free speech rights, as preposterous as the earlier legal fiction that a person (slave) is property.

A fear-laden gun culture originating in violent settler-colonialism and white nationalism-supremacy serve as a basis for the founding ideology and military strategy of the United States. Slave patrols and Indian fighters were our first “special operations,” establishing the essential White character of our militarized culture. As the systematic dispossession project continued, the US government signed over 400 treaties with Indigenous nations, violating every one of them, establishing deceit and outright lying as part of our cultural DNA.

The politics of violence based on classism and racism has been incessant throughout our history. Examining the US criminal injustice system housing a quarter of all the world’s prisoners reveals brutal truth when comparing extreme disparities in punishments by race, and class. Justice?

I studied the history of the city of my birth--Geneva, New York, which in the 1700s was Kanadesaga, capitol of the Seneca nation. On September 8, 1779, Major General John Sullivan and his forty-five hundred soldiers eradicated these

“merciless Indian Savages” in the largest Revolutionary War battle of 1779 --a terrorist, scorched-earth campaign massacring civilians while destroying all forty of the well-established Seneca towns, including Kanadesaga. By 1788, the European settlers renamed it Geneva, as if nothing had happened, a deserved reward for superiors.

All those arrowheads I enjoyed collecting as a child possessed a profound dark secret about the nature and character of my ancestors. However, I would only discover their secret after deep reflections from my Viet Nam awakening.

Official US military interventionism began with the US Marine invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1798 during the undeclared naval war with France. However, hundreds of settler paramilitary units had been killing Indians since the 1620s. But imperialism has been explicit policy since the late 1890s to assure domestic prosperity. In 1907, Woodrow Wilson while president of Princeton University (six years before being elected US president) lectured: “Since trade ignores national boundaries and the manufacturer insists on having the world as a market, the flag of his nation must follow him, and the doors of the nations which are closed against him must be battered down... Colonies must be obtained or planted, in order that no useful corner of the world may be overlooked or left unused.” President McKinley, and various

Senators continued to advocate “a foreign market for our surplus products.” US meddling, both “soft,” and hard, has never stopped.

Traveling to a number of nations in Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East have exposed me to details of hundreds of US overt interventions, and thousands of covert destabilization actions. These policies have caused the murders of millions, 20 to 30 million alone since WWII during the so-called “Cold War”. Only five of these nearly 600 military interventions have been declared wars as required by the Constitution, clearly indicating our sacred document is not taken seriously. This also tells us the system has no interest in being accountable to its own Constitution, or international law. Speaking with peasants in these victim-countries invariably reveals the horrendous cruelty of US interveners and their surrogates. Does the US possess any intentions to be law abiding? Does the US possess any feelings for others, or only selfish imperial ambitions? And does anyone care?

Violence against even White citizens has matched violence we have carried out in foreign policy. The Alien and Sedition Acts of 1917-18 were enacted to suppress anti-war dissent against US entrance into World War I. Thousands of US Americans were deported and imprisoned following World War I for “radical” anti-war expressions, including labor leaders and socialists. Some were tor-

tured in US prisons. Ironically, free speech dissent is most critical when a government decides to go to war. The original Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 stifled free speech of US citizens, including elected officials, who objected to the undeclared war against France. Free speech? Huh?

While the US was locking up and deporting citizens for opposing World War I, the FBI was ignoring extremely violent KKK supremacist groups whose six million members--nearly 25 percent of the white male population at the time--were lynching with impunity an average of six African Americans a month. Equal protection?

The first known use of air power against civilians was committed by US Marines in Haiti in 1919. But, the second known use of US air power against civilians occurred in Tulsa, Oklahoma, May 31-June 1, 1921, when hundreds of economically successful Black residents living in a 36-square block community were murdered, including from low flying white-piloted planes dropping incendiaries, destroying nearly 1,300 buildings. How many US Americans know about this abomination?

Walter White, a longtime leader in the National Association for Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), concluded that southerners fear of Negro progress offends the intangible feeling of racial superiority, explaining the

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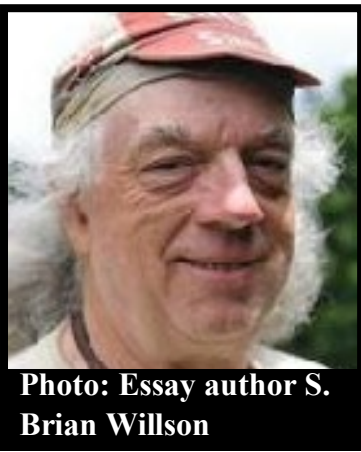


Photo: Essay author S. Brian Willson

Epiphany: (From page 9)

intensity of White savagery. The sense of established White superiority (or anyone possessing those feelings) often leads to an insecure character from lack of practicing accountability with others in a world of varied, challenging relationships. Those feelings easily morph into paranoia of others, and delusions of self grandeur—one of the most difficult psychological orders to treat, as the persistent pathology of racism (and classism) so attests.

The third known use of US bombing civilians occurred at Blair Mountain, West Virginia, August-September 1921. As many as 15,000 striking coal miners attempting to unionize were attacked by 2,000 armed sheriff's deputies, coal company paramilitaries, US troops, and US Army Martin MB-1 bombers, killing as many as 100 miners, with many more wounded. Before the battles had ended, more than a million ammunition rounds had been fired. Nearly 1,000 miners were ironically indicted for murder of the nearly 30 deaths among the miner's attackers. Over 700 union organizers have been mur-

dered in our history. Is this known by many?

We continue to be obsessed with personal and government guns (police and military) as a guarantor of our security. Those who question easy access to guns, even assault weapons, or the ridiculously wasteful military spending, are thought of as nearly traitorous. US citizens personally own nearly 400 million firearms, or 40 percent of all private guns in the world. On average, three US citizens are killed every day by police, disproportionately African Americans. So far in 2019, the US has experienced more than one mass shooting (4 or more shot) every day. Our gun death rate is ten times above that of other high income countries. Using violence as a default position historically ends in disaster, as it has been proven over and over that violence spirals out of control into more violence, while distracting from serious discourse. Why the incredible record of violence? Insecurity?

Under its doctrine of Full Spectrum Dominance, the US government routinely dispatches military ships to every sea space, military planes to every airspace, hundreds of satellites into outer space, while ordering Special Forces units to operate clandestinely in nearly three-fourths of the world's countries. Additionally, of the 1.4 million US soldiers in the world, nearly 200,000 are positioned in as many as 150 countries, most stationed at 800 major military bases in 80 nations. The US

also possesses a large percentage of the world's weapons of mass destruction, and recently has dispensed with any genuine effort at containing the spread of nuclear weapons. The annual military budget, including hidden costs, amounts to an exorbitant \$1.25 trillion a year, more money than the next seven countries combined spend on their militaries. If you want to be guaranteed health care and a modest house, join the Army. Otherwise these human rights are "unaffordable." If you want gun control, start at the top.

How to explain the extent and breadth of our violent militarism and global imperialism? Paranoia? It seems that our sense of superiority justifies hurtful dispossession from others to acquire and preserve undeserved privilege.

After exiting the military in 1970, my opinions about the US war against the Vietnamese were affirmed with the 1971 release of the Pentagon Papers revealing the more than 20 years of criminal intentions, and deceit, to thwart Vietnamese aspirations for self-determination. Earlier in 1971, January 31-February 2, Vietnam Veterans Against the War conducted the "Winter Soldier Investigation: An Inquiry into American War Crimes" when nearly 120 veterans testified about the war crimes and atrocities they committed or witnessed in Viet Nam. I was aghast when learning about Nixon's intended Huston plan to crimi-

nally interrupt antiwar activities, the FBI's sixteen-year COINTELPRO of more than 2,000 illegal actions against innocent US citizens, the CIA's Operation CHAOS keeping tabs on 300,000 citizens opposed to the Viet Nam war, and the National Security Agency's Operation SHAMROCK watch lists of those communicating with people overseas. Respect for the law? Huh? Further research revealed that as early as 1934 President Roosevelt instituted a long-standing joint FBI-military program to conduct domestic intelligence with broad investigative scope. The "American" Kool Aid indeed has sedated us.

Today our freedoms are further curtailed, for example, as the National Security Agency (NSA) spies on every US American, the Authorization of Military Force Act (AUMF) allows warrantless electronic surveillance of anyone suspected of aiding terrorism, and the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) enables indefinite detention of US citizens, even arrest by the military. Where is the Constitution when we need it? Or was it ever really there for us?

One of the most revealing chapters in our history is the incredible sympathy the US possessed for authoritarian Nazi Germany. Even though the Soviet military was most critical in defeating the Nazis in World War II, deep fear of the Bolsheviks (the emer-

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gence of an alternative social-economic system to capitalism) motivated US America's wealthy class, with complicity of the US government, to support the rise of Nazi Germany from the mid-1930s into the war years themselves. The US capitalists supported the Nazi capitalists to defeat the "threat" of socialism. Elite power brokers included leaders of Wall Street and wealthy "barons" such as the Rockefellers and Andrew Mellon, and businesses such as Ford Motor, IBM (tabulating daily location of Jews in the Holocaust), General Motors, General Electric, Standard Oil, Texaco, ITT, International Harvester, Chase Manhattan Bank, the House of Morgan banking dynasty, DuPont, United Aircraft, etc., who enjoyed huge profits from the war. And following the war, the US's "Operation Gladio" systematically defeated popular anti-Nazi groups throughout Europe, while "Operation Paperclip" secretly brought Nazi scientists and other professionals to the US. Our affinity for fascism has been established.

Psychologically, it is important to note that our national identity has consistently been markedly defined by demonizing others – "merciless savages", "uppity niggers", "anarchists", "radicals", "communists", "Russians", "alien filth", "narco-traffickers", "terrorists", "shithole countries", "vermin", etc., echoing psychologist Carl Jung's principle of

"shadow projection." Jung described a cowardly trick we play on ourselves: avoid looking in the mirror so as not to take responsibility for seeing our own demons. We "see" the evil in others, perpetuating a nation addicted to war against them, obscenely profiting as we self-righteously deny our own severe pathologies. If we had looked in the mirror we would have learned what Pogo told us, "We have met the enemy and he is us."

Ecopsychologist Chellis Glendinning suggests that modern humans suffer from deep insecurity that emerged from collective traumas hundreds of generations ago. A serious disconnect from intimacy with the earth occurred when our ancient ancestors began controlling nature through agriculture and animal domestication. Evolutionary philosopher Gregory Bateson concludes that addictive behavior is consistent with the Western approach to life that pits mind against body, while behaving as if the natural world is a commodity. We seek various distractions to numb our pain from this feeling of aloofness. Technology, not Nature, has become our God. ■

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of enactment of this Act."

Additionally, it appears that \$500 million is appropriated for "Israeli Cooperative Programs," which includes weapons procurements.

While it is difficult to interpret different allocations and far-distanced portions of the legislation going to the same target, one thing is clear: loads of money has been appropriated to a far-away apartheid state, as Americans remain unprotected from rent-related water shutoffs under the legislation.

Meanwhile, any aid to the Palestinian Authority will be held up if its officials initiate or support any kind of investigation at the International Criminal Court (ICC) that seeks the prosecution of Israeli nationals for crimes against humanity.

In neighboring Syria, which has been constantly bombed by Israel since the outbreak of the foreign-backed proxy war against the country's government, Congress has appropriated \$40 million toward "non-lethal stabilization" — in other words, destabilization assistance.

While the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has largely been defeated, \$710 million to counter the group remains "available until September 30, 2022".

Iran, meanwhile, is mentioned 22 times in the legislation.

The "Afghanistan Security Forces Fund" of \$3 billion will "remain available until September 30, 2022," and is geared toward the "security forces

of Afghanistan, including the provision of equipment, supplies, services, training, facility and infrastructure repair, renovation, construction, and funding..."

The legislation also appropriates \$250 million to reimburse the governments of Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia, and Oman on border security spending, with \$150 million going to Jordan, a geostrategic lynchpin that shares a border with Iraq, Israel, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and the Palestinian West Bank.

Another \$241.4 million of appropriations through the "Department of State, foreign operations, and related programs" will be made "available for assistance to Tunisia."

Egypt's military, notorious for its repressive crackdowns on dissent, is due to receive a colossal \$1.3 billion, according to the guidelines established in the Camp David Accords.

While US citizens continue to suffer the economic fallout of haphazard government shutdowns that have been largely ineffective in dealing with the coronavirus pandemic, Congress

passed a greatly reduced stimulus packaged alongside a massive handout to corporate America and its foreign client states.

Now it is up to the outgoing president — notorious for his "America First" rhetoric — to sign the legislation into law. Reports indicate he intends to do just that. ■

Read article online at: thegrayzone.com/2020/12/22/covid-regime-change-us-pandemic-relief/

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