



VETERANS FOR PEACE
HUMBOLDT BAY
CHAPTER 56

THE FOGHORN

OCTOBER
2015

“Cutting Through the Fog of War”

The Golden Rule Recalled to Life

By Ellen Taylor

Sally Willowbee, Hiroshima atomic bomb survivor Shigeko Sasamori and Kitty Bigelow Benton, daughter of the original captain of the Golden Rule, applied the traditional christening prior to its launching on Saturday, June 20, at the Zerlang & Zerlang boat yard on the Samoa peninsula. Willowbee is a daughter of one of the original Golden Rule crew members.

On June 20, a gray afternoon, a crowd gathered on the bank of Zerlang and Zerlang Boat Yard in Samoa to witness the launching of the Golden Rule. Out on Humboldt Bay, kayaks and yachts drifted around, waiting to accompany her across the water.

The mood was excited but somber. Most present were old enough to have life experiences entangled with the history being commemorated. And this event was starkly allegorical, beginning with the very name, Golden Rule, foundation of practically all the philosophies of the world, gleaming on the boat's stern. Its premiere performance, 57 years ago, had been an attempt to save the earth by sailing into the U.S. atomic bomb testing grounds. The U.S. Coast Guard caught them almost immediately, but its aspiration caught the public's imagination and resulted in a miracle, almost like the Butterfly That Stamped of the Kipling tale. The Partial Test Ban Treaty, ending atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons, was signed in 1963.

The boat then disappeared from history for a mysterious interval, but its crew most certainly did not. They wended their way through the topography of the century, samurais for social justice. James Peck began his life of protest by getting beaten up during the labor movements of the 1930s. He spent three years incarcerated for antiwar protests during World War II (and desegregated the jail mess hall). He demonstrated tirelessly for the antinuclear movement after the war.

Peck was on the first Freedom Ride, the Journey of Reconciliation, in 1947, with Bayard Rustin. He was beaten to a pulp during the Freedom Rides of the 1960s, then brought a successful lawsuit against the FBI for colluding with the KKK in their vicious attacks on the riders.

He protested the Vietnam War. He was gassed at Columbia University and at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. He set up tiger cages in front of the United Nations protesting the treatment of Vietnamese political prisoners. He supported draft card burners. He sang Japanese protest songs at the gates of nuclear power plants, and was arrested in an action on Wall Street against the financiers of the nuclear industry.

In the words of William Huntington, another member of the crew, at the 50th reunion of his Harvard class: “We have had a lifespan laid out in the heart of the 20th century. Before we were born, the Hague conferences promised an end to war. After World War I, which dominated our youth, we were told that was the last war. At the close of World War II, which interrupted our prime years, we joined in the resolve that this should never happen again ... And now, as I take my seat for the final act, I cannot imagine how it will end ... what will make it come out right. But in my heart I know it must. The grandchildren will live! Harvard and the world will go on. But, in today's reality, we cannot just be audience ...”

Back on the edge of Humboldt Bay, Shigeko Sasamori, who had been burned almost past recognition at Hiroshima, rechristened the Golden Rule before the boat slipped back into her element. Sasamori described her experience, in strong, eloquent broken

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English. She was a 13-year-old wearing two pairs of pants — which saved her from fatal burns — when she pointed out the Enola Gay to a friend as it floated into the blue sky over Hiroshima.

Leroy Zerlang, owner of the boat yard, told of the Golden Rule's 50-year plunge into obscurity, much of it under water, and its mysterious return. He and the others, who worked doggedly for five years to recall this boat to life, have conferred honor upon Humboldt County. They have in fact achieved a sort of saintly status. They would, I am sure, scoff at this reflection. Indeed, Zerlang, in telling how a crew raised the Golden Rule's rotting hulk from the bay, cloaked his story in the patois of self-interest, declaring that he "knew it was famous and he could sell it," though he finally gave it to "those clowns that stand in front of the courthouse on Fridays in the rain" (the Veterans for Peace).

Orion Sherwood, the only surviving member of the original crew, sat in the bow of the Golden Rule as she moved out into the water, his silver hair lifting gently in the breeze. What was he thinking? Of the crew dancing on the deck in mischievous delight as they stole away from the Coast Guard 57 years ago? Or was he thinking of the aforementioned grandchildren of William Huntington's musings?

The instinct for survival, demonstrated by U.S. citizens' response to the 1958 voyage of the Golden Rule, has languished in today's world. If the public is aware at all that the U.S. and Russia each have 2,500 nuclear warheads aimed at each other's cities, on hair-trigger alert, it does not seem to feel the targets burning into their backs. Somehow the outrage natural to being held eternally hostage has been stifled, a sacrifice to financial and political leaders who do not share a single one of the public's interests.

Contemptuously and imperiously, the U.S. defies its obligation under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty to decrease its nuclear stockpiles. We make 80 new H-bombs a year. We are going to spend \$341 billion upgrading nuclear weapons over the next decade.

People do not want to cooperate in their own suicide. They hate the sickening militarism with which the media infects us. But the mechanisms of democracy have been usurped by money, and resistance is less possible every day.

At the Mattole Grange barbecue this Fourth of July, as I listened once more to the lovely voice of Claire Trower singing our national anthem, I had a vision of what the song really meant. It is not a war song. Francis Scott Key, also on a boat, is staring through the blackness and destruction with which the British Empire is smashing Fort Henry, searching for a glimmer of hope.

Today's empire is not the British, but, alas, we ourselves. Imperialism is the enemy, and this time it is our own. With manic savagery we are bombing and shelling the shreds that remain of the inspiration for which our flag might have stood. Then, like Key, we peer desperately through the blackness of our own moral monstrosity, many times more malignant than the simple blade of an ISIS fanatic, hoping to see a flash of what the flag once aspired to.

The Golden Rule sailed into San Diego Bay on Aug. 1, in time for the Veterans For Peace conference. She's now making her return voyage. May the miracle of her resurrection restore our stamina to insist on the survival of our grandchildren and great-grandchildren on all the waterfronts of the world.

Ellen Taylor, a 40-year Humboldt County resident and long-time admirer of Veterans for Peace, lives in Petrolia.

Depleted Uranium/Weapons of Mass Destruction

COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted by Peter Aronson, Co-Chair DU/WMD

I'm including my monthly Chapter 56 committee report to the Foghorn with the hope you find it interesting and informative, and it broadens the readership of issues affecting all of us. Each synopsis includes a link for more on that topic.

1. World Nuclear Arsenal <http://www.ploughshares.org/world-nuclear-stockpile-report>

Nine countries in the world possess a total of 15,695 nuclear weapons. The United States and Russia account for 93 percent of that total.

Since their peak in the mid-1980's, global arsenals have shrunk by over two-thirds. More countries have given up weapons and programs in the past 30 years than have tried to acquire them. The direction is positive.

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Total Nuclear Weapons: 15,695

RUSSIA	7,500
USA	7,100
FRANCE	300
CHINA	250
UK	225
PAKISTAN	120
INDIA	110
ISRAEL	80
N.KOREA	10

Hans Kristensen and Robert Norris of the Federation of American Scientists are the leading experts in estimating the size of global nuclear weapons inventories. The table is a compilation of their estimates and analyses, with links to their full reports. These reports are published in The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (<http://thebulletin.org/>) and discussed further at the FAS Strategic Security Blog (<http://fas.org/blogs/security/>).

From the U.N. <http://www.un.org/en/events/nuclearweaponelimination/> “As of 2015, not one nuclear weapon has been physically destroyed pursuant to a treaty, bilateral or multilateral, and no nuclear disarmament negotiations is underway.

We, the U.S., are signatory to and in breach of the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS 26 SEPTEMBER

The Obama administration’s proposed nuclear modernization program is now before Congress. “Modernization” means more!

2. No place to put High Level Nuclear Waste (HLNW). YUCCA Mountain “Revisited” <http://www.nirs.org/radwaste/yucca/yuccatalkingpoints215.pdf>

The proposed nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain would directly impact 35 states and millions of people living in transport hubs—our major urban centers—during decades of radioactive waste transport. Routine radiation exposure, routine security, and economic impacts would not be trivial. The program also projects radiation, security and economic consequences from the relatively rare, but committed accidents that will happen as a function of the millions of shipment miles associated with thousands of rail cars, or tens of thousands of trucks traveling from the reactors--80% of which are east of the Mississippi River--to the West. Barge shipments on the Great Lakes, inland waterways and canals are also anticipated. Some accident scenarios are high consequence. See: http://www.state.nv.us/nucwaste/news2009/pdf/nv090421us_map.pdf And <http://www.state.nv.us/nucwaste/trans.htm> And <http://www.nirs.org/radwaste/hlwtransport/mobilechernobyl.htm>

From BEYOND NUCLEAR: www.beyondnuclear.org

Help stop the Yucca Mountain radioactive waste dump, once and for all ! The nuclear power industry, its friends in Congress, and at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), still want to “screw Nevada” (the most common name for the 1987 raw-politics-trump-science law that singled out Yucca in the first place).

3. The Man Who Saved the World.

On the night of September 26, 1983, Stanislav Petrov disobeyed military protocol and probably prevented a nuclear holocaust.

For a few crucial minutes on September 26, 1983, Stanislav Petrov held the fate of the world in his hands. It was the height of the Cold War. The Soviets had recently shot down a Korean airliner. The United States was preparing to deploy Pershing II missiles in Europe. The Soviets suspected that the United States was planning a nuclear first strike. In this tense time, a nuclear war was almost started by an error.

UNFOLD ZERO <http://www.unfoldzero.org/> is helping to organize special screenings of this powerful movie in parliaments, universities and public theatres around the world during the week of September 21 (International Day for Peace) to September 26 (International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons).

These important movie examples still another reminder of how near we were [are!] to another nuclear holocaust!

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Next VFP56 meeting will be held on Thursday, October 1st at 7:00 PM. Meeting will be held at 24 Unitarian Fellowship Way, Bayside, Jacoby Creek Road. Veterans and non-veterans are more than welcome to come and help us dialogue about what we together can do to bring about peace in this complex world.



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4. From Nuclear information Resources Service (NIRS) 8/19/15
- <http://www.nirs.org/>

Pro nuclear power advocates submitted 3 petitions to the NRC that would significantly change public radiation safety standard.

Currently most modern societies, including the NRC & EPA, use a model called “Linear No Threshold” (LNT) which is a hypothesized model of cancer induction in response to ionizing radiation.

The model says that additional cancer risk is linear with respect to the absorbed dose, and becomes zero only at zero dose. This model is used as the basis of most nuclear-related legislation around the world, See this link for more: http://rationalwiki.org/wiki/Linear_no-threshold

Petitioners propose using the “Hormesis” model.

Here’s the basic difference between the two models: the LNT model, used by the National Academies of Sciences and all government agencies, acknowledges that there is no such thing as a “safe” level of radiation exposure. All exposure carries some risk of cancer or other disease, and that risk rises with the amount of exposure.

The “hormesis” model, on the other hand, asserts—with little to no scientific backing—that exposure to very low levels of radiation can actually be beneficial to people, and that there is no concern about exposures until they reach very high levels.

The sponsors of these petitions are the radiological equivalent of climate deniers—they either refuse to believe the scientific evidence, or deliberately ignore it to promote the interests of an industry.

THANKS to the NIRS team for the above.

For me, this provides another example of special interests superceeding public (health) interests in the name of profit, a standard for many corporations.

“If you want to end war then Instead of sending guns, send books. Instead of sending tanks, send pens. Instead of sending soldiers, send teachers.” ~ Malala Yousafzai (17 year-old Noble Peace Laureate)



From Japan to Vietnam, Radiation and Agent Orange Survivors Deserve Justice From the U.S.

August 19, 2015

by Marjorie Cohn, VFP Advisory Board member

<http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/32387-from-japan-to-vietnam-radiation-and-agent-orange-survivors-deserve-justice-from-the-us>

We have just marked anniversaries of the war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the US government against the people of Japan and Vietnam. Seventy years ago, on August 6, 1945, the US military unleashed an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, killing at least 140,000 people. Three days later, the United States dropped a second bomb, on Nagasaki, which killed 70,000. And 54 years ago, on August 10, 1961, the US military began spraying Agent Orange in Vietnam. It contained the deadly chemical dioxin, which has poisoned an estimated 3 million people throughout that country.

Devastating Effects of Radiation in Hiroshima and Nagasaki

On the day of the first atomic bombing, 19-year-old Shinji Mikamo was on the roof of his house in Hiroshima helping his father prepare it for demolition when he saw a huge fireball coming at him. Then he heard a deafening explosion and felt a searing pain throughout his body. He said he felt as if boiling water had been poured over him. Shinji was three-quarters of a mile from the epicenter of the bomb. His chest and right arm were totally burned. Pieces of his flesh fell from his body like ragged clothing. The pain was unbearable. Shinji survived but most of his family perished.

Shinji’s daughter, Dr. Akiko Mikamo, told her father’s story at the Veterans for Peace convention in San Diego on August 7. She wrote the book, *Rising From the Ashes: A True Story of Survival and Forgiveness From Hiroshima*. Akiko’s mother Miyoko, who was indoors about a half-mile from the epicenter, was also severely injured in the bombing, but she too survived.

Akiko said 99 percent of those who were outdoors at the time of the blast died immediately or within 48 hours. A week after the bombing, thousands of people had experienced a unique combination of symptoms, Susan Southard wrote in the *Los Angeles Times*:

Their hair fell out in large clumps, their wounds secreted extreme amounts of pus, and their gums swelled and bled. Purple spots appeared on their bodies, signs of hemorrhaging beneath the skin. Infections ravaged their internal organs. Within a few days of the onset of symptoms, many people lost consciousness, mumbled deliriously and died in extreme pain; others languished for weeks before either dying or slowly recovering.

Southard notes that the US government censored Japanese news

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reports, photographs, testimonies and scientific research about the condition of the survivors.

To read more stories like this, visit Human Rights and Global Wrongs

Gen. Leslie Groves, director of the Manhattan Project, which created the atom bombs, testified before Congress that death resulting from exposure to large amounts of radiation takes place "without undue suffering." He added it is "a very pleasant way to die."

Thirty years after the end of World War II, numerous cases of leukemia, stomach cancer and colon cancer were documented.

The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were criminal because at the time Japan was already defeated and had taken steps to surrender. With these atomic bombings, the United States launched the Cold War, marking the beginning of its nuclear threat.

The Continuing Legacy of Agent Orange in Vietnam

Sixteen years after the United States' nuclear attacks on Japan, the US military began spraying Vietnam with Agent Orange-dioxin. In addition to the more than 3 million Vietnamese people killed during the Vietnam War, an equivalent number of people suffer serious diseases and children continue to be born with defects from Agent Orange. US veterans of the Vietnam War and their children suffer as well.

Agent Orange caused direct damage to those exposed to dioxin, including cancers, skin disorders, liver damage, pulmonary and heart diseases, defects to reproductive capacity and nervous disorders. It resulted in indirect damage to the children of those exposed to dioxin, including severe physical deformities, mental and physical disabilities, diseases and shortened life spans.

Dan Shea joined the US Marine Corps in 1968 at the age of 19. He served in Vietnam a little more than two months. But he was in Quang Tri, one of the areas where much of the Agent Orange was sprayed. When Shea saw barrels "all over" with orange stripes on them, he had no idea the dioxin they contained would change his life forever. When they ran out of water, he and his fellow Marines would drink out of the river.

In 1977, Shea's son Casey was born with congenital heart disease and a cleft palate. Before his third birthday, Casey underwent heart surgery for the hole in his heart. Ten hours after surgery, Casey went into a coma and died seven weeks later.

Just as the US censored information about the effects of radiation after the atomic bombings, the US government and the chemical companies that manufactured Agent Orange - including Dow and Monsanto - also suppressed the 1965 Bionetics study that demonstrated dioxin caused many birth defects in experimental animals. The spraying of Agent Orange finally stopped when that study was made public.

Shea, who also addressed the Veterans for Peace convention, works with me on the Vietnam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility Campaign. We seek to obtain relief for the Vietnamese, Vietnamese-American and US victims of Agent Orange through the recently introduced H.R. 2114. US vets have received some compensation, but not nearly enough. Vietnamese people and Vietnamese-Americans have received nothing for their suffering.

This bill would assist with the cleanup of dioxin still present in Vietnam. It would also provide assistance to the public health system in Vietnam directed at the 3 million Vietnamese people affected by Agent Orange. It would extend assistance to the affected children of male US veterans who suffer the same set of birth defects covered for the children of female veterans. It would also lead to research on the extent of Agent Orange-related diseases in the Vietnamese-American community, and provide them with assistance. Finally, it would lead to laboratory and epidemiological research on the effects of Agent Orange.

Agent Orange in Japan

The US government has also denied that Agent Orange is present on Okinawa, the Pentagon's main support base during the Vietnam War. In February 2013, the Pentagon issued a report denying that there is Agent Orange on Okinawa, but it did not order environmental tests or interview veterans who claimed exposure to Agent Orange there. "The usage of Agent Orange and military defoliants in Okinawa is one of the best kept secrets of the Cold War," according to Jon Mitchell, a journalist based in Tokyo.

"The US government has been lying about Agent Orange on Okinawa for more than 50 years," Mitchell said. An investigation by Okinawa City and the Okinawa Defense Bureau found dioxin and other components of Agent Orange in several barrels found on Okinawa. Many bore markings of Dow Chemical, one of the manufacturers of Agent Orange. The Japan Times cited reports of military veterans who said that burying surplus chemicals, including Agent Orange, "was standard operating procedure for the US military on Okinawa."

Two hundred and fifty US service members are claiming damages from exposure to Agent Orange on Okinawa during the Vietnam War, but very few have received compensation from their government. In spite of the Pentagon report, the US Department of Veterans Affairs granted relief in October 2013 to a retired Marine Corps driver who has prostate cancer. The judge ruled that his cancer was triggered by his transport and use of Agent Orange.

Abolish Nuclear Weapons and Compensate Victims of Agent Orange

Besides being criminal, the United States' use of nuclear weap-

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ons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and poisoning of Vietnam and Okinawa with Agent Orange, are a shameful legacy. The denial and cover-up of each of these crimes adds insult to injury.

As we work toward a nuclear deal with Iran, the US government should abide by its commitment to nuclear disarmament in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

It is also time to fully compensate the victims of Agent Orange and fund a total cleanup of the areas in Vietnam that remain contaminated by the toxic chemical. Urge your congressional representative to cosponsor H.R. 2114, the Victims of Agent Orange Relief Act of 2015.

Finally, we must hold our leaders accountable for their crimes in Japan and Vietnam, and ensure that such atrocities never happen again.

America's Tween Soldiers

Middle schoolers: Uncle Sam wants you

BY SETH KERSHNER

A review of programs in more than a dozen states found that there are at least 97 public middle schools currently offering military-style education.

Last year, Henry F. Moss Middle School in Bowling Green, Ohio, offered students a brand new course. And, as a headline in the local newspaper proclaimed, this was “not your traditional class.” For starters, the teacher—an army sergeant—had told the Bowling Green Daily News that one of his goals was to expose these seventh- and eighth-graders to “military values” that they could use as “building blocks” in life. To that end, students in the class earn military style ranks, engage in army-style “PT” (physical training) and each Wednesday, wear camouflage pants and boots.

This is the Moss Middle School Leadership Corps, part of the growing trend of military-style education for pre-adolescents.

Middle school military programs are younger cousins of the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC), a Pentagon program taught by retired military officers and present in more than 3,500 high schools nationwide. Although there are strong similarities with JROTC—military-style uniforms, close-order drills, a curriculum that emphasizes patriotism and military history—the key difference is that JROTC is supported by federal funds and middle school military programs are not, by federal law. That means the continued existence of the middle school programs depends on state or district funding and, in some cases, charitable contributions.

Although the localized nature of the programs and the variety of names they go by—most commonly “leadership corps” or “cadet corps”—make them difficult to quantify, a review of programs by *In These Times* in more than a dozen states found that there are at least 97 public middle schools currently offering military-style education.

A driving force is the Fort Worth, Texas-based National Middle School Cadet Corps (NMSCC), a nonprofit that supplies curriculum and support to more than 50 middle school military programs nationwide. In a 2013 presentation to Fort Worth school officials, Jeremiah Marshall, COO of NMSCC, displayed a U.S. map with dozens of strategically affixed red dots. “Our goal and vision is to get a program everywhere that you see one of those red dots,” he said.

Though such programs date back to the 1990s—beginning in Tulsa, Oklahoma—it was only after a tremendous expansion of the programs in the 2000s that mounting concerns about middle school militarism led to the first known cases of organized resistance. In February 2004, at the height of grassroots opposition to the Iraq War, Los Angeles-area activists convened a workshop titled “Stop-

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Ed Asner Praises the Golden Rule Peace Boat

“The beauty of man and woman is exemplified by The Golden Rule. The scarifying ugliness of man is exemplified by the atomic bomb and its successors. We truly play a game of 3-card monte when we get into the discussion of should we or should we not drop the bomb. Who are we kidding? Atomic weaponry is an abomination. If anyone does drop the bomb, then the game is over. Atomic weaponry must be outlawed by the world.”

Ed Asner



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ping Militarism in Our Schools” that included extended discussion of middle school military programs. More significant and sustained organizing has arisen in Louisville, Kentucky, where a local chapter of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR)—a century-old organization devoted to promoting social justice issues—has been at the forefront of a campaign to block the militarization of a local middle school.

Activist Chris Harmer, a member of Louisville FOR’s steering committee, and his colleagues leapt into action in December 2012, when the county school board expressed interest in establishing a “cadet academy” magnet school at Myers Middle School. To support their case, county school board members presented an analysis of 900 high-school students by the school district’s office of data management. Their report concluded that JROTC students had better academic outcomes, fewer discipline problems and higher attendance than their non-JROTC peers.

Knowing that the district would respect hard data more than activists’ opinions, Harmer and his colleagues invited Jason Gainous, a political science professor at the University of Louisville, to scrutinize the school district’s study. At a school board meeting in December 2013, Gainous unveiled his conclusion: There was no statistically significant difference between JROTC and non-JROTC students. Harmer says Gainous’s study is “very embarrassing to the school administration, which says it is committed to evidence-based decision-making.”

One of the most frequently touted claims by proponents of middle school military training is that the discipline improves academic and behavioral performance. However, in what appears to be the only empirical study of this topic, a University of Houston graduate student found that middle school military programs in three Texas school districts may lead to improved student attendance, but have no discernible impact on reading and math scores. Critics, seizing on this lack of hard data, suggest that the most likely effect of these programs is to encourage youth to embrace the military as a career path.

So are such programs simply promoting military careers to young children? In response to this question, Colonel Larry Morden, executive officer of the California Cadet Corps, a National Guard program with a presence in approximately 30 middle schools, was emphatic: “The number one goal is to provide [the] cadet with leadership training,” he wrote in an email to *In These Times*. “We do NOT stress a military career.”

However, some programs, like the one at Moss Middle School, are explicitly designed to prepare students for high school JROTC, which (according to the military’s own surveys) sends about 40 percent of its graduates into the military.

Opponents of middle school military training programs often cite the apparent ethnic profiling of poor and minority children. In 2003, two teachers’ union activists presented resolutions to the Los Angeles school board to limit military programs’ outreach and expansion,

in which they noted that the California Cadet Corps’ middle school programs were “concentrated disproportionately in low income, working class communities.”

Today, that pattern appears to hold. For example, the military program is currently present in eight of the 10 middle schools in Compton, one of the state’s poorest cities, where Latinos make up two-thirds of the population. At Myers Middle School in Louisville, 69 percent of students are minorities and more than 80 percent qualify for free or reduced-price school lunches.

Critics argue that equality of educational opportunity is undermined when schools over-expose African-American and Latino students at such a young age to the armed services. Military training programs can chew up a large portion of the school budget, leaving little room for academic enrichment like music or after-school programs—or even more basic fare, like college prep classes. According to a 2006 report by UCLA’s Institute for Democracy, Education and Access, 73 percent of Los Angeles County high schools that offer JROTC “do not offer enough college preparatory courses for all students to take a college preparatory curriculum.” In Chris Harmer’s words: “Poor and minority kids are being tracked into military careers as early as sixth grade. That’s what’s so insidious about this.”

Last September, the Fellowship of Reconciliation joined a coalition of nearly 60 non-governmental organizations, academic researchers and others to launch the campaign A National Call: Save Civilian Education. Their goal: to resist further incursions from the military and to push other progressive organizations to make the issue a priority.

At the same time, the campaign against militarization has led Louisville FOR—which is made up, Harmer says wryly, of “middle-aged white lefties”—to look at broader issues of race and class injustice. The group has joined a coalition focusing on another problem in Louisville schools—racial disparities in student achievement.

“We need to continually put our anti-militarism work into the larger context,” he wrote in an email to *In These Times*. What he and other activists have called the “school-to-military pipeline” is an issue deeply connected with anti-poverty and anti-racism work. Simply put, Harmer added, “The work is an integral piece of a broader movement toward a more just society.”

SETH KERSHNER

Seth Kershner is a freelance writer and researcher based in Western Massachusetts. His articles on U.S. military involvement in public education have appeared in a number of magazines including Rethinking Schools, Sojourners, and Bitch. Kershner is the co-author (with Scott Harding) of Counter-recruitment and the Campaign to Demilitarize Public Schools, which will be published in 2015 by Palgrave Macmillan.





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If you would like to submit an article, opinion, comment or response to anything you have read which might interest the members of VFP-56, please e-mail it to turtldnccer@aol.com, in word format, or mail to Jim Sorter at 1762 Buttermilk Lane, Arcata, CA 95521. Submissions will be included on a first come basis until the newsletter is full. Late arriving submissions will be archived for future issues.



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