



News

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Not Another Iraq War

Ed Flaherty

The United States must NOT fire a bullet, launch a missile, or drop a bomb in Iraq. To do so would be an act of war. To do so would not only be illegal, it would be tragically counterproductive for both Iraqi and U.S. citizens. By what stretch of imagination can our military actions in Iraq accomplish now that eight years of war, 160,000 U.S. troops, and \$1.5 trillion failed to accomplish? Our invasion and occupation, preceded by a decade of debilitating sanctions, have left Iraq in much worse condition than it had been. Iraqis are not stupid; they know that. Our military action would ultimately be welcomed by no one, and would incite further sectarian violence.

Representatives Barbara Lee (D) and Scott Rigell (R) have circulated a letter to President Obama insisting that there can be no new U.S. war in Iraq without the approval of Congress. Eighty members of Congress have signed that letter. None of the Iowa congressional delegation has signed that letter. Why not?

President Obama is being pressured by prophets like Dick Cheney ("My belief is we will, in fact, be greeted as liberators." March, 2003) to give war in Iraq another go, as he lays the blame for Iraq's ills at Obama's feet. The people of the U.S. did not approve of our Iraq war in 2003, and we don't approve of another now. But we must not be silent. ☺

The above statement was written by Ed Flaherty and signed by 20 members of Veterans For Peace #161 on July 8, 2014. It has been sent to Representatives Loebbeck and Braley, and Senators Grassley and Harkin, and to eight newspapers.

For more on the ongoing crisis in Iraq—and proposals for nonviolent next steps—visit fcl.org/iraq.

Highlights of PEACE Iowa activities in recent months

Friday Vigil

Lovers of peace gather in front of the Pentacrest in downtown Iowa City every Friday afternoon from 4:45 to 5:15 to raise awareness among passersby about issues of peace, military spending, drone warfare, etc. In recent weeks, the number of vigil attendees has increased.

Helping Syrian refugees

PEACE Iowa co-sponsored an Iowa City Emergency Campaign for Syrian Refugees Fundraiser on January 23, at Old Brick. A large crowd enjoyed Middle Eastern food and music, and donations went to UNICEF.

Inside this Issue

- Not Another Iraq War
- PEACE Iowa Annual Meeting and Potluck
- Highlights of PEACE Iowa activities
- Militarism: Climate Health and Human Rights Connections
- Peace Day at the Iowa Children's Museum
- Two Ignominious Anniversaries
- Changing of the Signs
- New Logo For PEACE Iowa!

PEACE Iowa Annual Meeting and Potluck

Saturday, September 27, 2014
City Park, Shelter 8

12:00 Potluck 1:00 Program

Speaker: Kathleen McQuillen, Iowa Program Director of the American Friends Service Committee

Topic: U.S. military build-up in Iraq, the situation in Syria, and recent events in Israel-Palestine

Live music by the Blue Stem Trio (Loren and Margaret Brumm and Tim Schulte)

Please join us to begin shaping PEACE Iowa's agenda for the coming year.

Letter to Senators & Representatives regarding drones

PEACE Iowa signed onto a letter, initiated and signed by other organizations, and sent it to government representatives, raising legal and ethical issues about the use of drones. These issues include the lack of oversight and accountability, the lack of transparency, the violation of human rights and international law, and the fact that their use is a war crime.

Peace sing-along and fundraiser

On February 15, a concert fundraiser for PEACE Iowa was held at the Center for Conscious Living, featuring a performance by Dada Vedaprajananda, a yogic monk and activist. Despite the blizzard-like weather, 20 people attended and were led in a sing-along of classic peace songs by Dada.

Protesting drone warfare

PEACE Iowa members participated in a rally held at the Iowa Air National Guard base at the Des Moines airport to protest the piloting and controlling of armed Reaper Drones from the IANG site on March 15.

Peace Day at the Iowa Children's Museum

PEACE Iowa sponsored peace literacy training for junior and senior high students this spring, in cooperation with the Iowa Children's Museum. Those junior and senior high students then created and supervised activities to provide peace education to younger children who visited the museum on Peace Day, April 13. This is the second year PEACE Iowa has coordinated this project, and we hope it will become an annual event. ☺



Members of PEACE Iowa and other like-minded group promote peace and environmental responsibility in the July 4, 2014 parade in Coralville.

Militarism: Climate Health and Human Rights Connections

Maureen McCue

Our health and a livable future depend on a healthy environment and a health-supporting climate. Without reducing the production of greenhouse gases, increased frequency of severe storms, heat waves, degraded air quality, and reduced water quality increase risks to public health and the likelihood of violent outbreaks over scarce resources. Rising temperatures alone increase interpersonal conflict. Environmental challenges induced by the changing climate are increasingly recognized by military leaders as drivers of violent conflict. Yet, in the quest for security, society has overlooked how militarism and armed conflicts themselves constitute important drivers of the evolving climate chaos.

Conflict-related destruction of the environment, including fragile ecosystems and health infrastructures, brings death, injury and disease to combatants, civilians, and other living beings alike. Any military action, whether in actual conflict or in preparation for war, involves the profligate use & waste of petroleum products and other non-renewable resources. Conflict in the oil-rich Middle East has meant the burning of oil wells, massive contamination of air and water, and destruction of water, agriculture, health and other life sustaining infrastructure, while simultaneously producing massive flows of refugees and displaced people. These resultant refugee flows disrupt the environment along their path and within crowded camps. Staff, materials, food, and water must all be produced and transported to protect those caught in such untenable situations. Tons of building materials and energy are then required for reconstruction after the cease-fire is declared. Loss of forests and concrete themselves constitute a significant source of greenhouse gas given the loss of greenhouse gas sinks and the energy required to produce concrete.

What about the period before a violent conflict? Consider the greenhouse gas emissions coming from the industries producing weapons systems, large and small, especially here in the U.S. Massive use of resources and energy are required for daily military exercises, war games, weapons testing, military aviation, troop transfer, after which there is all the waste such activities generate all across the globe. The military is the single largest consumer of fossil fuels.

Even less recognized are the ways militarism kills without war. Global military expenditures greatly outpace those devoted to education and health, research, alternative fuel production, or green

development. There is a huge gap between what nations are prepared to allocate for military means to provide security and maintain their global and regional power status, versus that which is allocated to alleviate poverty or promote environmental and climate sustainability.

Human health depends on a low carbon climate even more than on a low carbon diet! Militarism is a threat multiplier not only as it directly affects the environment and climate before, during and after violent conflict, but indirectly as it reduces funds available to combat climate change, and diverts funds and resources from research into climate solutions. Reducing dependence on fossil fuels will make us healthier and reduce threats of climate change. Similarly, reducing dependence on militarism to solve the world's challenges will help stabilize the climate and improve global health. How many more have to suffer before we change course? How much can we afford to gamble before taking serious action? The time to cut military spending and waste is now. ☺

Peace Day at the Iowa Children's Museum

Diana Henry

Peace Day . . . why does this community need it? Educating young children, youth and adults about the various ways violence is perpetrated and how it impacts our lives can never be taken for granted, even in a predominantly middle and upper middle class community such as Iowa City. It is exactly in this kind of community that it can be dismissed until a serious problem occurs in the schools, home, churches, neighborhood or nation. Only through awareness can action be taken to address violence.

For the past two years teacher Alisa Meggitt has been invaluable in her ability to recruit junior and senior high students for our peace literacy training and Peace Day. Deb Dunkhase, the executive director of the Iowa Children's Museum, has generously allowed us to partner with the museum to conduct the training and host Peace Day at the museum. By collaborating with Nancy Porter and other PEACE Iowa members, junior and senior high students were educated about issues of violence and peace. In addition, John Jadryev, member of Veterans for Peace, spoke to the youth about the controversial use of drones in warfare.

Out of this training the youth developed mini-workshops in which they taught peaceful options to violent encounters to younger children who visited the museum on Sunday, April 13, 2014. The workshops and activities that were implemented by the junior and senior high school students for Peace Day included:

- **Trust:** Trust Maze and Peace Turtle
- **Sharing:** Peace Garden and Helping Hands for Peace
- **Cooperation:** Peace Market and Take Flight for Peace
- **Compassion:** Peace Feelings and Peace Fortune Tellers
- **Games:** Peace Frisbee and Stamp Out Violence Strategies

As the day concluded, all the youth and adult volunteers expressed their desire to do this project again next year. ☺



At the Peace Day event at the Iowa Children's Museum, junior high students work with younger children to help them understand how to practice peace in their everyday lives.

Two Ignominious Anniversaries

Ed Flaherty

This summer we have to decide how to digest two anniversaries: July 28, which marks 100 years since the beginning of WW I in 1914; and August 7, which marks 50 years since Congress approved the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution in 1964.

All wars are evil, and all could have been avoided if individuals, tribes, leaders, and countries had practiced common decency and common sense. But some wars are more vile, more unjustified than your run-of-the-mill war. WW I and the Vietnam War both fit that description.

What might have been settled with some arm-wrestling contests or sword fights among royal cousins in 1914 instead led to the deaths of 10 million soldiers and 6 million civilians. British Prime Minister Lloyd George said, "If people really knew, the war would be stopped tomorrow. But of course they don't know, and can't know." Not only was the war the most devastating

the world had ever seen, it did not lead to peace. In spite of the widespread horror at the carnage of WWI, WWII grew out of the seeds of WWI.

Fast-forwarding from 1914 to August 7, 1964, we witness the U.S. Senate voting 88 to 2 to approve the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, henceforth used as the legal basis for the U.S. war in Vietnam. The resolution was based on lies and pretense—history is clear on this. The two senators, Morse and Gruening, who had the courage to say no, should be honored as heroes. Many have visited the Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall in Washington D.C., which lists the 58,286 U.S. troops who died as a result of the war. It's about 150 yards long. If a similar wall were built for the Vietnamese who were killed in the war, the wall would stretch for miles. People are still dying today from the Agent Orange and land mines of that war.

The anniversaries are an opportunity to understand our past and thus more effectively wage peace in our war-torn present. ☺

New Logo for PEACE Iowa!

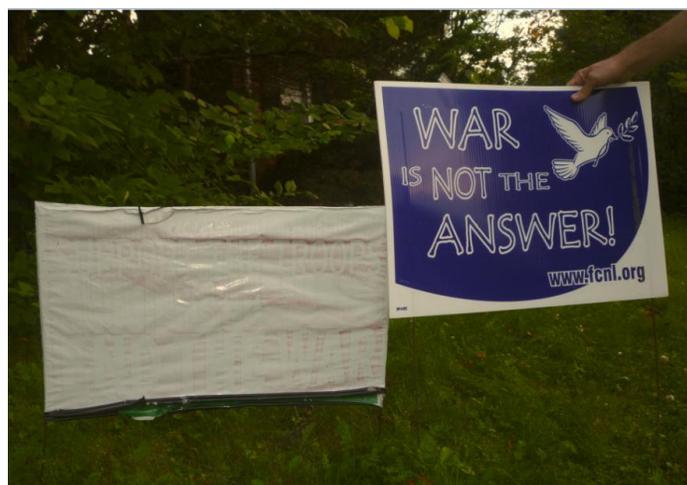
PEACE Iowa has a beautiful new logo, to be used on official letterheads, newsletters, and a large banner, which can be displayed during parades, vigils and other events. Thanks go to Rose Peraud and Lori Nelson for working on the design, and Franklin Sieberling and Ethan Nelson-Moore for technical assistance. ☺



PEACE Iowa board members Aaron Rempp and Ann Stromquist hold up a banner with PEACE Iowa's new logo.

Changing of the Signs

Driving down Court Street, PEACE Iowa board member Ed Flaherty noticed a peace sign in the yard of a house at Court and Grant. "Support the Troops, End the War," the sign read, or at least it used to, as the sign had now weathered a number of Iowa winters and summers, and the red and white lettering was faded into an almost unreadable state. Ed and another board member Andy Douglas decided spontaneously to drop in on the homeowner, thank them for displaying the sign and offer to put up a new one. Thus it was that we met another peace lover, Lucy David, appreciated her beautiful yard, and with her agreement, were able to continue the message of peace on that corner by replacing the sign. ☺



PEACE Iowa Peace Education and Action Center of Eastern Iowa www.peaceiowa.org

Promoting international peace through education, intercultural communication, public witness, citizen involvement, and personal choices

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Office hours:
Wednesdays 12:15 to 4:00 pm
Thursdays 1:00 to 3:00 pm

