

# New Hampshire Peace Action News

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## From the Director

by Will Hopkins

Donald Trump is about to be sworn in as President. Take a deep breath, have a good cry; alone, or with a loved one, put a safety pin on your lapel, google the meaning if you have questions why. When you are ready, let's start talking about how we get through this.

I think I had a good idea how to work on a Clinton Administration to save lives. After all, we had eight years of President Obama to get used to moderately militarist Democratic leadership.

The Trump administration is going to be a very different beast. Trump has said some very positive things during the campaign about what he thinks American Foreign Policy should look like. He has suggested that foreign bases should be paid for by host countries or be withdrawn, that our support for the Wahhabi axis of military power (Al-Nusra and elements aligned with the Islamic State) in Syria has

been detrimental to the Syrian civil war and that we might do better to be in conversation with Assad and Putin about how to confront the Islamic State. His admiration and relationship with Putin may well lower the risks of a nuclear exchange with Russia, which former Secretary Perry states is higher than ever in history.

But he has also said some things that show him to be remarkably ignorant of the complexities of global power. His policy towards Iran may slide us closer than comfort to a nuclear conflict with Russia, despite his reported relationship, particularly if the rumors pan out that John Bolton and his ilk will be making up Trump's foreign policy team. There is no way to know what we are going to be up against as we move forward.

Some of our early priorities may include:

Keeping Ambassador John Bolton out of the cabinet.

Leveraging and encouraging Senator Ayotte to help

push Justice Garland through in the lame duck (probably won't happen, but may be worth the effort even on the long shot).

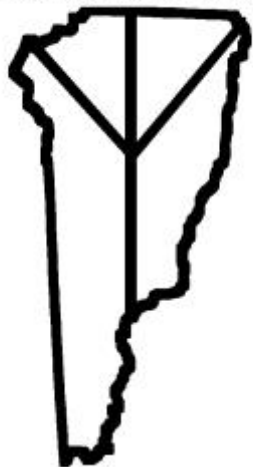
Making sure we are working furiously to protect communities at risk who are scared, and feel isolated.

The rallies and outcry around the nation suggest there is huge energy around opposing President Trump's embrace of the alt-right and his own status as the new face and icon of white supremacist culture. How are we going to harvest this outpouring of energy, and where are we going to apply the leverage we are able to generate? Let's keep our eyes to the things we might be able to have an influence on. It is likely that our position will significantly improve in the House and Senate in two years, and that we can move beyond Trump in four. If we can make it there without nuclear weapons being detonated, there is a solid chance that we are going to be alright.

Muslims, Jews, Latinos, African Americans, and the

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***A View from the Woods Part 3******by John Raby*****Hobbling Toward Oblivion; or, Nuclear Warfare Narrowly Missed**

Readers of a certain age will vividly remember the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, when humanity narrowly averted a full-scale nuclear war. You may have heard that this event is the only such near miss in our history. It isn't. And while the chances of a nuclear war breaking out in any given year are extremely remote, the possibility of such a catastrophe occurring increases with time. As William Perry has pointed out any number of times, it is chiefly by dumb luck that we have dodged the nuclear bullet. The question, then, is how long our luck can hold out.

Space in this column does not allow a full listing of close calls, but here is a sampler:

October 5, 1960: US early warning radar at Thule, Greenland reported a Soviet missile attack aimed at the United States, and the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) went on maximum alert. Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev was in New York at the time, which raised doubts about the alarm in time to avert war. As it turned out, Thule's radar had mistaken a moonrise over Norway for a Soviet missile attack.

November 24, 1961: A breakdown in communications among the Strategic Air Command (SAC), NORAD, and the early warning radar station at Thule led to an alert about a Soviet missile attack. The alert was called off when a US bomber crew made contact with Thule and found that no such attack was taking place. AT&T was supposed to provide backup circuits for the communication system, but had not done so, despite assuring the government that it had.

November 9, 1979: Computers at NORAD headquarters reported a major Soviet attack on the United States, setting off a full scale alert. After six minutes without confirmation, officials called off the alert. As it turned out, the computers had misinterpreted a training tape as a Soviet missile attack. After the incident, senior State Department adviser Marshall Shulman stated, "false alerts of this kind are not a rare occurrence. There is a complacency about handling them that disturbs me."

March 15, 1980: As part of a training exercise, the USSR launched four submarine based missiles from near the Kurile Islands. A US early warning sensor temporarily led

US officials to suspect the launch was a Soviet missile attack.

June 3 and 6, 1980: Warnings of a Soviet missile attack set off yet more alerts at SAC, though the alerts were suspended when warning systems showed no further evidence of attacks. Later on, the Defense Department traced the false alerts to a failed computer chip.

September 26, 1983: A Soviet early warning satellite mistakenly took the sun's reflection from the tops of clouds as a US flight of five land based missiles aimed at the USSR. Since the satellite was working properly, Soviet authorities would ordinarily have interpreted the warning as genuine. The Soviet officer on duty, thinking that a US attack with only five missiles was highly unlikely, played his hunch and told his superiors before he knew it that the alarm was false. He thereby prevented a nuclear war.

January 25, 1995: Norwegian scientists were engaged in a study of the northern lights when Russian early warning radar mistakenly interpreted the launch of a Norwegian research rocket as a US missile aimed at Russia. When Russian satellites showed no additional launches, Russian leaders declared the incident a false alarm.

August 29-30, 2007: Six nuclear-armed cruise missiles were mistakenly loaded onto a B-52 at Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota, but no one bothered to check if the missiles were live. For a day and a half, no one in the Air Force was aware that six live nuclear missiles were missing. Responding to the slip-up, retired Air Force General Eugene Habiger declared, "I have been in the nuclear business since 1966, and am not aware of any incident more disturbing."

October 23, 2010: For nearly an hour, the launch control center at Warren Air Force Base, Wyoming, lost contact with 50 Minuteman III ICBMs under its control. It was later found that a circuit card in one of the base's computers had been improperly installed during routine maintenance.

So far, we have dodged the nuclear bullet. Who knows how long our run of luck will last?

The last three columns have served up enough gloom for now. The next one will address the happier task of considering alternatives to the present nuclear arms race, and what we as citizens might do about it.

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*This is the third of a four part series by John Raby of the NHPA/AFSC Nuclear Weapons Working Group. It was written for and first published in the InterTown Record.*



At the 34 Annual Fall Fundraiser, Executive Director Will Hopkins recognized outgoing Board Chair Lynn Chong for her five years as "Interim" Board Chair. Lynn will remain on the Board as a member.



Board member Nick Dundorf and Membership Advocate Hannah Eliason "make the pitch" for funds to keep NH Peace Action going for another year. Great job! Thanks to Bill Maddocks for the photo.

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*a special project of NHPA*

## Can ISIS Be Defeated Without the Use of Violence?

*By Michael Ferber*

Now that the appalling national election is behind us, ISIS (variously ISIL or Daesh) will be back in the news. New attacks in Europe, like those by ISIS-agents in Paris and Brussels recently, or like those by free-lance devotees in Orlando and elsewhere in America, will now echo more loudly in the super-reverberating cave of post-Trump American politics. What do we in the peace movement have to say about it? What should we be doing?

We rightly cringed when Chris Christie called the US campaign against ISIS part of “the next world war” or when Ted Cruz promised to “carpet bomb them into oblivion,” or when Donald Trump promised “do something extremely tough over there,” but do we think ISIS can be defeated some other way, a peaceful way—by negotiations, or economic pressure, or something else? I don’t imagine many Americans are anxiously awaiting what the peace movement has to say about ISIS, but we owe it to them anyway, and to our own self-respect, to try to come up with some feasible proposals.

Events may be overtaking us, as a large and unstable coalition of armies makes headway into Mosul, and a very unlikely coalition (Turks and Kurds together within it!) is moving on Raqqa. But the outcomes of these battles are very uncertain, and they surely will not eliminate ISIS as a terrorist threat in the region or worldwide.

What national Peace Action urges are these steps: (1) stop bombing ISIS, because it will kill innocent people and breed more radicals, (2) “Hit ISIS where it hurts: the wallet!” by “cracking down” on Turkish and Iraqi oil dealers, and (3) build coalitions to choke off the supply of arms and money, and to negotiate an end to the Syrian civil war. I find these proposals reasonable in themselves, but inadequate and somewhat frustrating, not least because they are silent about whether the US has any military role to play at all. I suspect the silence is due to the fact that there are many pacifists in the peace movement who they will not sign on to any statement that endorses military action, so “stop the bombing” and cutting off money are what they and the non-pacifists can agree on. It’s not enough.

I find the ISIS problem about the most difficult problem about foreign policy I have ever considered. I am not a pacifist, so I have no simple moral rule to fall back on. I have spent many years taking part in nonviolent political movements and thinking about nonviolent history and theory, so I have a lot invested in coming up with weapons from the nonviolent arsenal that might be effective against ISIS. I have a few ideas, but I am partly stumped. What follows, then, are some unsystematic observations and suggestions. With the help of better minds we might weave some of them into a policy, though parts of such a policy might cause divisions between the pacifists and non-pacifists. Or we could simply speak as individuals, while making clear that we have some differences as well as some common ground.

(1) The men and women in ISIS are committing acts about as hateful and disgusting as human beings can commit, and we mustn’t be naïve about this. Something terrible seems to come over them as they decide to join it, and they do terrible things once they join. They are filled with religious hatred against Yazidis, Christians, Jews, and every other kind of Muslims, not to mention long-dead pagans whose great monuments they cheerfully destroy. They kidnap men and torture them to death, or behead them, or make them sit upon bombs that they then detonate. They kidnap women

and turn them into sexual slaves, passing them from rapist to rapist until they are so badly hurt in body and soul that they wish they were dead. The ISIS men laugh and gloat in videos over the women they abuse. And they don’t mind killing children.

It is true that all people have a tendency to demonize their enemy of the moment, and we should be alert to the possibility that we have been misled by anti-ISIS propaganda, but I don’t think that is the case here. The ISIS spokespeople don’t try to disguise their viciousness, as their reputation for it is one of their weapons, and we have had enough escapees, defectors, and videotapes to confirm our worst fears.

To say we must “negotiate” with them, as some have urged, is to whistle in the dark. They aren’t interested in negotiating; they’ve never made demands to negotiate over; they cannot compromise over anything because they will settle for nothing less than establishing the “caliphate” that they will rule. They seem perfectly content to die. They seem to really believe that they will be rewarded in heaven if they die in warfare against the crusaders, heretics, heathens, and false prophets. They are close to genocidal, and in the face of forces that want to exterminate whole peoples, nonviolence, at least in the short term, runs out of options.

Of course they are only human, and the grip of ideology no doubt weakens in some of their minds especially as they face defeats on the battlefield or they recoil in horror from what they are ordered to do. Perhaps someday, if ISIS is surrounded and cut off from funds and weapons and recruits, they will want to negotiate, if only to negotiate their surrender. If they do, I’m not sure they will deserve any negotiable deal or amnesty; some will be guiltier than others of their unspeakable crimes, no doubt, but many will deserve to be locked up in prisons forever. Some crimes are unforgivable.

(2) It is probably true that the US invasion of Iraq, which the peace movement rightly opposed, has had a lot to do with the rise of ISIS and other terrorist groups; ISIS is partly a creature of the US and the invading coalition. We warned at the time that it might backfire, or “blowback,” and it certainly has. So it is tempting to say that the US should just get out of the region before it sets off even more uncontrollable violence and social collapse. Certainly we need to keep warning that the US record has been largely disastrous in the region. But it does not follow that we should just wash our hands of it, or just confine ourselves to humanitarian aid.

To be specific, it is right to warn that bombing Raqqa, Mosul, and other ISIS centers may have unintended effects, and not only the killing of innocent civilians. But what about bombing the wells, trucks, pipelines, or whatever oil infrastructure ISIS has captured? That will kill people too, and make a mess, but how else will we deny ISIS the money they get from oil? We can’t wait for diplomatic and economic pressures in and around Turkey and Iraq; that could take years, and our relations with Turkey are not good.

It is interesting that Donald Trump, who has also boasted that “I’ll go after ISIS big-league,” has emphasized cutting off oil rather than sending more troops. In the *NY Times* in March he said, “I would say knock the hell out of the oil and do it because it’s a primary source of money for ISIS. We have to destroy the oil. We should’ve taken it and we would’ve had it.” That would be close to the peace-movement position, though we might differ on how to knock the hell out of the oil. (Trump, of course, has said a lot of different things, and we cannot pin him down.)

(3) It seems obvious that the containment and elimination of ISIS can only come about through the people and governments in the area, virtually all of whom are Muslims of one sect or another. ISIS is a problem within Islam mainly, and Muslims are its main victims (though the poor Yazidis may be a close second); Islam must find

the answer. Open US, UK, French, or NATO attacks, whatever their military efficacy, come tainted as foreign, colonial, or “crusading” interventions, and ISIS is not the only group that can make good propaganda out of that fact. On the other hand, no state in the area except for the Kurdish proto-state seems to have had much impact on ISIS, and they have had that impact with the help of US air power. Now Iraqi forces and their coalition allies have regained some ISIS territory after having been humiliated by it, and are pushing into Mosul, but, again, only with the support of US air power, equipment on the ground, and advisers.

The Kurds may have their faults, and within Turkey Kurdish groups have sometimes murdered people in terrorist acts, but in the Rojava area of northern Syria and in Iraqi Kurdistan they seem to manage their affairs with some show of democracy, religious tolerance, and equality for women. Indeed it is hard not to take some satisfaction in knowing that the women in the Kurdish army are shooting and killing ISIS men who would like nothing better than to rape and torture them.

(4) Under Obama the US strategy seems to have rested on (1) US air power (in large part drones), (2) small elite US units for assassinations and rescues, and (3) material support, intelligence, and advice for Kurdish, Iraqi, opposition Syrian, etc. forces. Are we opposed to all this? The peace movement has made a thing about drones, for instance, pointing out that drones often inflict “collateral damage” in the form of killing innocent bystanders. Agreed, but what is the alternative? Large military forces like the ones that Bush sent to Iraq? That invasion caused many thousands of innocent deaths, whereas drone-strikes have caused some hundreds. Apparently President Obama authorizes all drone-strikes individually, a remarkable thing; we may disagree with him about drones, but at least he takes them very seriously and takes responsibility for them. Those who oppose drones should make clear what they think the alternative is. If it is simply to withdraw all military forces from the area they should say so, and then confront the probable outcome, the spread of ISIS and its murderous ways all over the region.

(5) We have heard recently about at least three prominent defectors from ISIS, one of whom brought a thumb drive full of data. These may be symptoms of despair or disorganization within ISIS. Surely we can agree that defections should be encouraged in every way: with offers of amnesty or leniency, protection against retaliation, and so on. But that will not be possible without armed forces of some kind to provide safe havens or even rescue missions.

(6) We have also heard about some remarkable organizations, created mainly by Yazidis and Kurds, which have smuggled quite a few hostages out of ISIS’ hands. The US should give these operations every support—which might mean nothing more than cash for bribes and cell phones for communicating. These are largely unviolent operations, but the smugglers are certainly armed, and need to be.

(7) Probably some double agents and spies have infiltrated ISIS, and some of them may be sowing dissension and spreading false rumors as well as sending information to the anti-ISIS coalition forces. This too we can welcome. If ISIS splits up, or has serious faction fights, it will probably save many innocent lives. We know ISIS and al-Qaeda seriously disagree about strategy, and have come to blows.

*Continued on page 6*

## Central America: One Coup, Three Summits, and the United States

by John Lamperti

In April 2009, newly inaugurated U.S. President Barack Obama told the fifth "Summit of the Americas" that a new era in U.S./Latin American relations was at hand. He called for hemispheric relationships "based on mutual respect and equality," and stated that we are "committed to combating [economic] inequality and creating prosperity from the bottom up... Today, too many people in the Americas live in fear. We must not tolerate violence and insecurity, no matter where it comes from", Mr. Obama said, adding that "We know that true security only comes with liberty and justice." In response to a press question about U.S. actions in Bolivia, the president was emphatic: "I am absolutely opposed and condemn any efforts at violent overthrows of democratically elected governments, wherever it happens in the hemisphere." Many Latin Americans found hope in Barack Obama's election and in these words.

Just two months later the president's declaration of a new era was put to the test. In Honduras a military coup exiled the country's elected president Manuel Zelaya and installed coup plotter Roberto Micheletti as "temporary president." President Obama immediately denounced these moves, saying "We believe that the coup was not legal and that President Zelaya remains the democratically elected president there," and he spoke of not wanting "to go back to a dark past." Nevertheless, the United States soon began to hedge on its condemnation, and a few months later recognized the government and president chosen in a highly dubious election managed by the coup regime itself. After that point our government strongly supported the return of Honduras to "normalcy" in its international relations.

Barak Obama attended two more "Summits of the Americas" as U.S. president. The sixth one was held in Colombia during April of 2012, and the long-frozen U.S. policy toward Cuba was attacked from many sides. The presiding host, Colombia's Juan Manuel Santos, declared that Cuba's exclusion from the summit was an "anachronism that keeps us anchored to a Cold War era we came out of various decades ago." The United States, however, seemed determined to keep that anachronism in place, insisting that the government of Cuba (but not that of Honduras) had not been "democratically elected." As a result, the summit produced no final declaration, a number of nations threatened to boycott the next summit if Cuba was not invited, and the future of the whole process seemed in doubt.

And then came summit number VII in Panama City, April 2015. Cuba was there, invited by host Panama, and despite its previous statements the United States now had no objection! U.S./Cuba diplomatic relations would soon be restored and further moves toward normalization were on the way. Plenty of problems for hemispheric relations remained, but Cuban policy had been the worst one, the immovable object standing in the way of progress. And the best part was soon to come: the March 2016 "baseball summit" in Havana where the Cuban national team played the Tampa Bay Rays, with presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro sitting side by side to watch. That was a moment to celebrate, when the dawn of a new era seemed possible.

Before the Honduran crisis of June 2009, the most recent Central American coup took place in El Salvador on October 15, 1979, when that nation's corrupt and repressive military ruler was replaced by a junta promising to bring fundamental reforms. The United States officially welcomed, rather than denounced, that changeover. But as in 2009, the reality of U.S. policy quickly became more complicated and less principled than those early pronouncements suggested. The U.S. supported the military over the democratic sectors, the reform movement failed and the nation suffered eleven years of brutal

and disastrous civil war. It's important to compare the actual history of Washington's involvement to its rhetoric, and a glance at the earlier history provides necessary perspective. Finally: where do we go from here?

### Honduras, 2009

Thirty years after the Salvadoran coup, the United States had a chance to find the right response to another coup. In April President Obama had spoken of a new era in U.S./Latin American relations, and very soon that declaration became a call for action. On June 28, some 100 Honduran soldiers surrounded the presidential residence in Tegucigalpa and captured President Manuel ("Mel") Zelaya. The president was taken at gunpoint to a military airbase and flown to the capital of Costa Rica, where he was left at the airport, still dressed in his pajamas. The National Assembly then installed its own leader Roberto Micheletti, a top organizer of the coup, as the nation's de facto acting president.

The international reaction to the coup was highly negative. It was condemned UN, the EU and the Organization of American States. Every country in the EU and in this hemisphere – except the United States – withdrew its ambassador from Honduras. President Obama promptly denounced it as "not legal" and implied that president Manuel Zelaya must be restored to office. But very soon the United States' position became far less clear. One important indication was the State Department's refusal to use the term "military coup" which would have required cutting off military aid – this refusal came despite a report from the U.S. Embassy in Honduras that a military coup, without any legal justification, was exactly what had happened. The role of the U.S. Secretary of State was particularly duplicitous as she recounts in her recent memoir *Hard Choices*: while the United States gave lip service to the nearly universal demand that President Zelaya should return to his position, Secretary Clinton was campaigning behind the scenes to make sure that did not happen. A few months later the United States completed its about face and recognized the government and president chosen in a highly dubious election managed by the coup regime itself. The U.S. reputation in Latin America, notably improved after President Obama's April speech, fell sharply.



José Manuel Zelaya Rosales

Subsequently Washington called for the return of Honduras to "normalcy" in its international relations, and pushed for that nation's readmission to the Organization of American States which had suspended its membership after the coup. The U.S. also maintained its close ties to the Honduran military. During the following years conditions in Honduras have declined steeply from an already low level: corruption and human rights abuses have mushroomed, drug trafficking has prospered, and the nation has experienced the world's highest homicide rate. In 2014 these problems were manifested by an unprecedented wave of very young refugees who arrived at the U.S./Mexican border seeking asylum, driven by intolerable levels of violence and poverty. In March 2016, the murder of Honduran human rights and environmental defender Berta Cáceres highlighted an

ongoing human rights disaster and brought calls from Congress for reassessing U.S. policy, especially its military and police aid.

Why were the Honduran military and elite so eager to remove President Zelaya, even though his term in office would have ended in a few months? Very broadly, although Mel Zelaya was himself a wealthy landowner, he was promoting New Deal-like policies favoring the poorest citizens of the country. He canceled certain mining concessions, raised the minimum wage, and took other steps threatening the projects and profits of some of the wealthiest Hondurans and benefiting some of the impoverished majority. Zelaya planned to hold a popular vote on whether to convene a convention to rewrite Honduras's highly flawed constitution; this was apparently the last straw for the country's powerful elite. But why then did the United States, always claiming to support democracy, quickly come to terms with the military coup against him? Although the picture is still incomplete, there are indications: some U.S. business interests felt threatened by Zelaya's reforms, his administration was developing closer relations with Hugo Chavez's Venezuela, and the U.S. military seems to have feared the weakening of its Honduran alliance and loss of its bases in the country. For the majority of Hondurans, the coup and its aftermath ended to their hopes for change.

"The universal rights to assembly and free speech must be respected, and the United States stands with all who seek to exercise those rights," said President Barack Obama in June 2009. He was talking about the repression of domestic protests in Iran. But a few days later in Honduras respect for those rights disappeared, and the United States did very little to stand with the Honduran people who supported their deposed president.

In both El Salvador (1979) and Honduras (2009) a liberal U.S. president failed to decisively back the democratic forces in a nation facing critical internal conflict. Worse, in both cases the United States gave aid and comfort to anti-democratic elements. The similarity between the U.S. acceptance of the Honduran coup and the Carter administration's failure in El Salvador (hugely compounded during the Reagan years) was all too evident, and a different approach toward the region remained an unkept promise.



### The United States and the Isthmus

The early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw many U.S. military interventions and occupations in the region. To cite just one example, in 1903 U.S. troops landed in Honduras for the first of what would be six interventions in 20 years. The United States showed no hesitation in enforcing American economic interests and imposing its version of order in what it considered its backyard.

General Smedley Butler was an iconic leader and hero of the U.S. Marine Corps; he received the Medal of Honor twice. Butler personally led many of those U.S. operations in Central America. After retiring from the Corps, he did some drastic rethinking:

"I helped make Mexico, especially Tampico, safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to



collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefits of Wall Street. The record of racketeering is long. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. In China I helped to see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested."

The correctness of General Butler's bitter assessment of his military service can be debated, but not the reality of the many U.S. military interventions in the Caribbean region. They remain part of the legacy of U.S./Central American relations.



Soon after 1930 there was a change. The "Good Neighbor Policy" is usually identified with Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency, although the term had also been used by his predecessors. In practice during the Roosevelt years, it meant the end of direct U.S. military interventions in the region. Influence and pressure continued by other means, principally economic and diplomatic, and U.S. interests did not noticeably suffer.

Nor did the United States pay much attention to democracy in relating to its Central American neighbors. A famous story, whether or not it is literally true, illustrates this attitude. In May 1939, Nicaraguan dictator/president Anastasio Somoza made an extravagant visit to Washington and to the New York World's Fair. On the eve of the visit, President Roosevelt is alleged to have had this exchange:

"Somoza?" the president asks his secretary of state, Cordell Hull. "Isn't that fellow supposed to be a son of a bitch?" To which Hull replies, "Yes, but he's *our* son of a bitch."

In other versions, Roosevelt made the statement himself. Whoever said it, that statement was accurate; the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza, lasting from 1936 until his assassination in 1956, was the direct result of the long U.S. military intervention (1912 to 1933) in Nicaragua and the creation of the National Guard with Somoza as its head. After the patriarch's death his two sons governed in turn, until in 1979 a broad popular uprising – not a coup! – ended the Somoza dynasty forever.

During World War II it was natural for the U.S. to maintain close relations with Central America's militaries, and to supply substantial quantities of U.S. arms. Those weapons never saw action against German or Japanese forces, but some of them eventually found use in inter-regional conflicts such as the brief "soccer war" of 1969 between El Salvador and Honduras. Their most important function, however, has been to help governments in the region maintain control over their own citizens.

After 1945 the Cold War replaced the hot one as the major U.S. security concern. The enemies in this hemisphere were now perceived to be not invading armies but popular movements and leftist political parties, whose members with few exceptions were local people protesting miserable conditions of life. In general, the United States continued its wartime alliance with military institutions and governments of the right. The "good neighbor policy" was evidently no longer in effect since the U.S. intervened directly with its own armed

forces in several cases: Dominican Republic (1965); Grenada (1983); Panama (1989). Usually, however, covert subversion (Guatemala in 1954) and the use of proxy forces (Cuba in 1961; Nicaragua and El Salvador in the 1980s; Haiti repeatedly; and others) were preferred. If being a "good neighbor" meant at least non-intervention, that policy was a thing of the past.

In the later years of the century U.S. presidents used differing slogans to characterize their approaches to Central America. In the 1960s John F. Kennedy introduced the "Alliance for Progress" as his trademark in the region; the Alliance consisted of sometimes helpful economic and trade policies coupled with "security" assistance aimed at preventing leftist parties or movements from gaining power. "Not allowing another Cuba" became the basic principle of U.S. policy, justifying subversion and terrorism against popular movements and left leaning governments throughout the hemisphere. After Kennedy's assassination the Vietnam War occupied U.S. attention and the economic side of the Alliance dwindled – but the support for right-wing, anti-communist governments and parties continued unabated during the Johnson and Nixon years.

#### Where do we go from here?

Those last two coups were in a sense opposites, one intended to promote reforms and the other to stop them, but the U.S. reactions to them were disturbingly similar. Both coups took place with liberal Democratic presidents in the White House, Jimmy Carter and Barak Obama. Both men advocated respect for human rights and democracy, and asserted that U.S. policy supported those ideals. In both cases, the initial U.S. reaction expressed by the president was consistent with that claim: In El Salvador the U.S. welcomed the end of an illegitimate, repressive military regime and the prospect of major reforms favoring the majority of the people, while thirty years later President Obama condemned the violent ouster of the elected president of Honduras and called for restoration of the legal order. In both cases, the United States seemed at first to take steps in support of those declarations. But this country did not speak or act consistently. Both times, parts of the administration and sectors of the military and intelligence institutions, plus influential members of Congress, preferred the old or the conservative order and worked successfully to undermine the initial statements from the U.S. government. In both cases, the principled response was quickly compromised, in practice if not in rhetoric.

"When I came to my first Summit of the Americas six years ago, I promised to begin a new chapter of engagement in this region" Mr. Obama recalled at the most recent summit in Panama, failing to mention that the U.S. embrace of the 2009 Honduran coup a few months later had made that promise look hollow. And now, he insisted in 2015, "the United States will not be imprisoned by the past." Could that be true? Continuing close U.S. ties with corrupt and undemocratic Honduras casts a dark shadow. Other U.S. disagreements with Latin America such as the "war on drugs" remain, and the Obama administration inexplicably created a new problem by its Executive Order of March 9, 2015. That order absurdly declared that the troubled situation in Venezuela created "an extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States," and it imposed sanctions against some of the country's leaders. Nevertheless, the new relationship between the United States and Cuba, so long overdue, does offer hope for progress in our region.

"In keeping with the Inter-American Democratic Charter, we continue to stand up strongly for democracy and human rights," President Obama said. A nice idea. If and when this country's policies actually match such declarations, the United States may at last become a "good neighbor."

#### Notes:

The White House Briefing Room (internet), April 17, 2009 (speech) and April 19 (press conference).

Reuters, June 29, 2009.

For the 24<sup>th</sup> straight year the U.N. General Assembly in October 2015 passed a resolution calling for the end of the U.S. economic blockade against Cuba. This time the vote was 191 to 2 (the U.S. and Israel).

*The Wikileaks Files*. New York and London: Verso, 2015. Pages 70-72.

Hillary Clinton, *Hard Choices*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014, Chapter 12. The (then) right-wing government of Canada followed a similar policy.

Some of my own observations: "Honduras: Repression, Resistance and Hope," *Truthout*, July 2, 2011.

"Statement on the Situation in Iran," June 20, 2009. *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Barack Obama, 2009, Book 1*, page 869. Government Printing Office.

General Smedley Butler, *War is a Racket*, 1935. Available on the internet here: <http://www.ratical.org/ratville/CAH/warisaracket.html>

George Black, *The Good Neighbor*, pages 70 – 72.

"Remarks by President Obama at the First Plenary Session of the Summit of the Americas," The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, April 11, 2015.

*John Lamperti is Chair of NH Peace Action's Board of Director's and Liaison to National Peace Action.*

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## Combatants for Peace

by Will Thomas

It took the killings of their daughters to bring them together and to move beyond fear and hatred. Bassam Aramin is a former Palestinian Fatah fighter whose daughter, Abir, age 10, was killed in 2008 by Israeli soldiers close to her school in Anata, just outside of Jerusalem.

Rami Elhanan is a former IDF soldier who fought in the 1973 Yom Kippur War and is the son of a Holocaust survivor. His daughter, Smadar, age 13, was killed, along with three of her friends, by two Palestinian suicide bombers.



Once enemies who despised each other, both men arrived at the same conclusion -- that violence only begets more violence. Thus, in 2005, was created a joint Israeli-Palestinian organization called, ironically, "Combatants for Peace." As part of a Global Exchange delegation that travelled to Israel and Occupied Palestine in December, I had an opportunity to meet with Rami and Bassam.

During his seven years in Israeli jails where he received beatings, Bassam had a life-changing experience. First, he saw a Holocaust film and cried when he saw innocent people about to be killed. Later, one of his jailers recognized Bassam's humanity, and provided him with books by Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Despite this, Bassam said his first meeting with Israelis in 2005 was difficult as both sides were suspicious of the other as there was much distrust. Israelis saw Palestinians as "terrorists" and Palestinians saw Israelis as "jailers" and "occupiers." Nevertheless, both sides educated each other and agreed to work for a common goal -- to create a peaceful society for all their children. Combatants for Peace agreed that the Israeli Occupation is the source of most of the on-going violence and they agreed to work to educate Israelis and Palestinians to understand the hopes and suffering of the other side so as to create dialogue and reconciliation.

Combatants for Peace has grown to 600 members as they aspire to change the dynamics between Israelis and Palestinians by employing peaceful, non-violent means. Tellingly, Gene Sharp's 186 methods of non-violent resistance was cited by Bassam. As for revenge towards the Israeli soldier who killed his daughter, Bassam said he still seeks justice, not vengeance, despite learning all charges were dropped against the accused IDF member. This grieving father said that "Israelis will never feel free unless Palestinians feel free" as he cited Dr. King's "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" quote.

Rami was a tank commander in the 1973 Yom Kippur War and related that he had a lot of friends who were killed. Leaving the IDF, he married, had children and settled in Jerusalem. On September 4, 1997, two Palestinian suicide bombers killed four young girls, including his daughter, Smadar. Seven days of mourning followed while his grief and rage persisted. And, yet, as Rami reflected, he wondered what good it would do to pursue vengeance as he knew it would never bring his daughter back to him. Rami had seen two paths: one, revenge, or two, choose the path of trying to discover why these

young men would kill themselves and other innocent people. He soon met a Jewish religious leader whose son, Eric, had been captured by Hamas and killed. This religious leader invited Rami to his house for a meeting. A hundred people came, and all were grieving parents. What shocked Rami, though, were the Palestinians who came to this meeting. For the first time in his life, he shook hands with Palestinians, and that night, he said, he had a religious experience. He was 47 but had never seen Palestinians as people, as human beings. Many of the people he met became part of a group called the "Families Forum," an Israeli-Palestinian organization for bereaved families. Rami offered our delegation this insight: "There is a wall in all of us of fear and hatred. We hate them because we fear them -- and we fear them because we do not know them. In the end, it will be with courage that we learn to love one another as we love ourselves."

In closing, Rami agreed with Bassam, who is now one of his deepest friends, that the occupation must end and the on-going repression must be stopped. He reminded us that Jews are not evil, but that they are fearful and afraid, especially when the second Intifada occurred in 2000. Israelis were living in terror, he said, so the government put up the 25-foot high walls. Yet, as Rami said, the walls in our heads are more critical as they lead to the dehumanization of the "other," in this case, of all Palestinians.



of the community of people who seek peace.

Two men, former warriors, Bassam and Rami, who had a common bond of grief, anger, and hatred for the "other" found the courage to move beyond hate and violence as

both have become part of the community of people who seek peace.

Will Thomas is an NHPA Board Member and Veterans For Peace member who has travelled many times to the Occupied Territories.

**Saturday, November 19:**

**Coalition for Open Democracy  
and NH Rebellion present:  
*Democracy Dinner***

Dinner with Francis Moore Lappe, who will unveil her brand new *Field Guide to the Money out of Politics Movement!* Great food, great people and inspiring conversation at the American Legion, Hooksett, NH. 5 pm.

Please visit [www.nhrebillion.org/calendar](http://www.nhrebillion.org/calendar) or call 603-715-8197 for tickets or more information.

*ISIS continued from Page 3*

(8) Humanitarian aid to the region? Of course. But we should make clear that even that is difficult, given the corrupt regimes in Iraq and Syria, the lack of US military infrastructure, and the sheer scale of the need for it. It will cost billions, and a lot may be wasted. Here perhaps we can try to be more specific. We should publicize a list of groups in the region who are doing good work and need our money.

(9) In the long run, of course, it rests with the international Muslim community to discourage its young people from joining terrorist groups, and non-Muslims can help that process indirectly by helping Muslims in the west feel less alienated or threatened than they now feel. Local groups could probably do more in that regard. Now that Trump is to be President, American Muslims must be feeling very worried; we must think of ways to protect them. But such work is indeed a long-run process; meanwhile ISIS, and other groups almost as vicious, are at their deadly daily work.

In sum, if we issue a statement, or give talks that purport to represent Peace Action, I think we should admit that there are some reasonable arguments for a military role of some sort for the US, and that it is hard to imagine even cutting off oil without military action. If we don't acknowledge these things, I don't know who outside the circle of peaceniks will take us seriously. That said, we should certainly dwell most on the nonviolent (or at least unviolent) actions the US could take, whatever else it does. We can have a lot to say on that score, without sounding unworldly and naïve.

*Michael Ferber is a graduate professor of English at UNH and NHPA Education Fund Board member. He was also the youngest member of the "Boston Five".*

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## My Piece of Mind Experience —by Hannah Eliason

When I pulled up to the World Fellowship Center in Albany, NH, I was afraid of what people would think of me. I didn't know who was going to be there or if they felt the same way that I did. It can be daunting not knowing if there are other teenagers like you who want to make a difference. Even though I could feel little pearls of sweat on my palms, I walked forward. In that moment I was faced with a decision: get back in my car and never know what could have been, or walk forward and embrace who I truly am. In that moment I decided to walk forward and that is the best decision I have made in my entire life.

Once I stepped through the front doors I was instantly greeted with smiles. I had never experienced such a warm environment in my entire life. Then one by one people came up to me and introduced themselves. After the first introduction I knew instantly that these people were just like me.

About an hour or so after everyone arrived, we all sat in a circle to talk about nonviolent protesting. If this topic was brought up at school there would be no one willing to talk, but this wasn't the case here. Almost everyone had an opinion on what nonviolence was. This took me by surprise, but was almost refreshing in a way to know that I am not the only teenager to think about bigger things than myself. It was so interesting to hear other perspectives on the topic that I had never heard before. It opened my eyes to a whole new world of thought. Everyone came from different backgrounds so we all had different experiences. This allowed not only for a new level of understanding about what we can do to help the world, but also a new level of acceptance. When like-minded people surround you, nothing else matters except for the person inside.

Peace of Mind is not only about serious thought, but also about building friendships and expressing yourself. At night everyone took part in Will Hopkins, the director of New Hampshire Peace Action, version of a talent show, or as he likes to put it "A talent, or lack thereof, show". There was poetry, stories, dancing, singing, and even a few monkey sounds curtsy of Alex. Then the girls went to bed, but the boys didn't, which is not a surprise since we are teenagers. However, in the morning the boys were hurting because we woke up at 4 a.m. to go on a sunrise hike. Along the way up to the summit Nick managed to find a frog, Will got us lost, and I managed to fall about three times. When we finally reached our destination and watched the start of a new day, I realize that it is not about the destination, but the journey.

When we got back, we sat around and talked about what it takes to start a campaign and who has done any in the past. Many of the kids had great ideas for their school in terms of environmentally friendly campaigns, but that almost didn't seem big enough for my school. Being a senior at Concord High School I had experienced first-hand the amount of discrimination that goes on daily. Since we have a lot of refugees in Concord, we are considered a very diverse high school for New Hampshire. After the talk was over I approached Kaity Thompson with my concern. After talking to Will, they both came back and sat down with me to make a plan on how to make my school a more welcoming environment for everyone. Without their help I wouldn't have been able to bring all of the progressive groups in the school together to create a larger, more accepting place for all people.

Peace of Mind is a youth retreat that allows young activists to truly be who they want to be. No one is there to judge you, after all why would someone immerse themselves into a group of hippies if they didn't want to. When I say hippies, I mean individuals who truly care about living in a peaceful world where no one has to fear waking up every morning. For being a group of youth there was an amazing amount of wisdom shared over the two days. This experience as helped me grow as a person in so many ways and I wouldn't trade my time at Peace of Mind for the world.

*Hannah Eliason is a student at Concord High School and was recently hired as the NH Peace Action Membership Advocate.*

## 350NH Updates

**OFFSHORE WIND UPDATE:** We passed a climate milestone this September. Atmospheric CO2 levels failed to fall below 400 parts per million (ppm). This is the time of year when carbon levels are usually at their lowest. The fact that we didn't fall below 400ppm this September means we likely won't see another day below 400ppm in our lifetimes. As this milestone passed 350NH delivered over 2000 signatures to Maggie Hassan demanding she start the process to develop offshore wind in NH. In the weeks following 350NH held a Stakeholders meeting with people from around the state. At this meeting we developed 3 strategic objectives for the campaign moving forward. 1) Pass resolutions in support of offshore wind in eight towns by March of next year. 2) Find 200 businesses to voice support for offshore wind in the next 3 years. 3) Create a broad coalition of climate groups, labor organizers, and stakeholders to take part in the wind campaign moving forward. If you would like to take part in achieving any of these goals please contact our coordinator at [Kaity@350NH.org](mailto:Kaity@350NH.org)!

**RESPONSE TO THE DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE:** Over the past few days hundreds of "water protectors" were arrested and moved off their land for disrupting the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). Arrests seem to clash with an 1851 treaty which gives ownership of the land to the Sioux tribe. In the latest spree of arrests police used sound cannons, mace and rubber bullets to control the crowd. In the past, private security contractors were filmed using dogs on protectors. A few weeks ago, 350NH joined a national call on encampment solidarity and turned around in 24 hours to host an event in our Dover office. In a day's notice, over 30 people came out. It was our most diverse and youth dominated event to date. Together we developed strategies to spread awareness in our communities and fundraise for the encampment. In the coming weeks we will hold a winter coat drive for folks taking part in the continued protection of their land. Coats can be dropped off at the NH Peace Action office (4 Park Street, Suite 210, Concord). This dedication and solidarity for the Sioux Tribe's resistance is a testament for what the future holds for our movement both here in New Hampshire and across the country.

*by Griffin Sinclair-Wingate, NHPA Education Fund Board Secretary, 350NH member and a student at UNH.*

### FROM THE DIRECTOR *continued from Page 1*

needs to discover who and what we are, to express the festering puss of white supremacy so that it can be washed away and healed. To unite us in opposition to unstable proto-facist demagoguery and help us to make that next leap into becoming the people we claim to be.

I think that we're going to get through this, but it's going to take a lot of hard work. I'm glad we are together, this is where the Peace movement, and greater movements for justice and equality must prove our metal. It is time to save our country and our world. So take a deep breath, have a good cry, put a safety pin on your lapel, and when you are ready, let's start doing the work of getting through this.

*Will Hopkins is Director of NH Peace Action and NH Peace Action Education Fund*

### SAVE THE DATES!

**November 29, 2016** Film screening of *We The People 2.0* on November 29, 6:00pm, Peterborough Community Theatre at 6 School St. in Peterborough.

*We the People 2.0* is a visual essay about how multinational and other corporate interests have devastated local decision-making and a sense of democracy in the United States.

Sponsored by NH Community Rights Network and Monadnock International Film Festival, there is a suggested donation but no one will be turned away. For more info: 490-6644.

**December 21, 2016.** National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day takes place each year on the longest night of the year, December 21st. American Friends Service Committee organizes this annual event at City Plaza (in front of the Statehouse). This years program will begin at 4 pm. Please bring a candle.

**January 21, 2017.** There is a Vigil planned in solidarity with marginalized communities who feel threatened. More details will be available soon. Please check the website [www.nhpeaceaction.org](http://www.nhpeaceaction.org) for updates.

Also on **January 21, 2017** there is a Women's March on Washington to shed light on women's issues, including sexual assault and workplace discrimination. You can learn more at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/2169332969958991/>

**September 21, 2017** A Piece of Pizza for Peace will be held on International Day of Peace. In front of the State House, Concord.



## Grass for the Elephants: Building Alternatives to Divisiveness

by Krisan Evenson, Ph.D.

Division is not a sustainable way of life. Not so long ago, we regarded conflicts in South Africa, Northern Ireland or Quebec as perennial, impossible to overcome. But even conflicts deemed 'intractable' have an ending. The resolution of conflicts does not require that one side is better or even more reasonable than another, but rather that each side has needs unable to be satisfied while in the state of conflict. Eventually, parties to the conflict come to see that there is something to that African proverb: "When elephants fight, it's the grass that suffers." Leaders come to agreement about how to live together despite conflict when they sense their communities' needs require it.

In the current U.S. climate, leaders have gauged their communities as having needs better served by conflict. This presidential campaign season devoted a lot of energy to the idea that American citizens' division could be permanent. Investing in discord has allowed heretofore non-apparent attitudes to capture our public discourse. As NHPA members, we should seize this unusual moment to demonstrate our particular affinity for conflict resolution. After all, if our only alternative to divisiveness is to counter or protest or argue better, then we merely contribute to the noise. In short, when we prepare our communities for conflict resolution, leaders can identify needs unable to be satisfied while in the state of conflict.

To prepare our communities, we might do three things: (a) foster the engagement in tactics that defuse tension; (b) change the either/or focus of many of our public policy questions and (c) focus on pro-active methods for citizens to navigate the array of media and interest group interpreta-

tions of current events.

These three approaches have several elements we can build together. For example:

Tactics that defuse tension might include a toolkit for smoothing that awkward holiday dinner conversation among other-party voters or helping young adults and their parents and grandparents talk with each other about political issues. Key things to try or avoid are not always obvious to those who wish for better conversations but are frustrated in their well-meaning efforts. While we raise the stakes and defensive attitudes, we lose the moment and the opportunity.

Changing the either/or focus of public policy questions could begin by helping citizens define which underlying problem is to be solved rather than which solution is 'better' or 'worse.' In addition, helping fellow citizens develop more than two positions on big policy questions of the day broadens both our conversation and our acceptance that there is more than one solution to a problem. Focusing on only one solution per problem raises the stakes and our defenses, leading to intractable conflict.

Finally, helping citizens navigate the information onslaught in pro-active ways would include strengthening citizen confidence in their ability to understand complex issues. Some approaches incorporate: (1) educating citizens on public policy areas \*not\* tied to current debates for baseline knowledge ahead of time; and (2) engaging current event interpretation habits and transforming citizens' anxiety into literacy that can distinguish events from the noise (on all sides) surrounding them. Trying to learn a new policy ques-

tion's content while simultaneously focused on candidates' one-solution response also raises the stakes and our defenses.

Building citizen media literacy, identifying problems to be solved with multiple solutions and talking with (rather than to) others changes our public discourse. This approach gives leaders a much more civil, civic dialogue and connects them to public policy questions they intended to solve at the outset. Finally, when leaders perceive that the community is ready to scale down because their needs are better served through resolution than conflict, then they are ready in turn to bring solutions to the broader community.

These suggestions above are hardly the only ones possible after an electoral season as we have just collectively experienced. They might launch, however, our next efforts together as we begin to recover from these campaigns. We can certainly afford to invest a lot of energy into the idea that our divisions are not permanent and that resolving conflicts is in all of our best interests. If the elephants are not fighting, the grass can thrive.

If you would like to work on any of these three areas or suggest another, we would love to hear from you at [info@nhpeaceaction.org](mailto:info@nhpeaceaction.org).

*Krisan Evenson, a political scientist, also holds a graduate certificate from the Program on the Analysis and Resolution of Conflicts at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. It has recently refocused as the Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration.*

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