

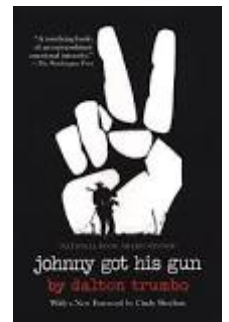
How Lying Causes Casualties of War

Lying and warfare have long gone hand in hand, a reality that continues today with a U.S. news media that opts for simpleminded storylines about good guys vs. bad guys, the pro-U.S. side against the America-hating side. Such nonsense has caused much death and destruction, notes Gary G. Kohls.

By Gary G. Kohls

Not too long ago I watched “Johnny Got His Gun,” the film adaptation of Dalton Trumbo’s famous antiwar novel with the same title about a young American soldier who came home from the trenches of World War I in France, having miraculously survived an artillery explosion that blew away his face, as well as both legs and both arms not to mention his dog tags.

The helpless victim was being kept alive in the back wards of a military hospital by his “caregivers,” probably out of scientific curiosity. The doctors and nurses treated him as a vegetable that was unable to communicate. Moreover, the staff believed that he was unable to perceive pain or have feelings.



Because the military didn’t want the public to be aware of this horrific example of the gruesomeness of war, he was segregated (as is still done to this very day in veterans’ hospitals and nursing homes) to locked room where nobody would be able to give witness to his plight. A series of flashbacks provided sympathetic evidence of the victim’s innocent pre-war civilian life and total lack of appreciation about the ghastly reality of organized mass human slaughter that is modern war.

What was most moving about “Johnny Got His Gun” was the fact that the victim, kept alive by a stomach and tracheotomy tubes, was actually quite aware of his surroundings and what was being done to him without his consent. Finally finding a way to communicate with his caregivers, the story ends with no certain resolution, forcing the viewer to think about end-of-life ethics, militarism and the lies, half-truths and cover-ups of the consequences of war.

Several years ago I read portions of a book by Phillip Knightley entitled *The First Casualty: From the Crimea to Vietnam: The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist and Myth Maker*. Knightley convincingly tells us that in order to start or perpetuate a war a nation has to lie, and the lies start with the approved war correspondent or “embedded” journalist who obediently only tells pre-approved versions of what is really happening in the war zone.

It is a historical truth that if an aggressive nation-state can't get its intended victim to start a war, it can always cunningly provoke him into drawing “first blood.” That, of course, goes for most bullies, even the playground ones.

In the case of wars, aggressor nations can distort the truth by claiming self-defense as the motivation. Invasion and occupation can easily be obfuscated by the nation's propaganda machine by calling it “liberation” or “protective custody” rather than the criminal acts of theft and murder.

Sadly, whistle-blowing truth-seekers who try to expose the truths about the dirty underbelly of war usually are silenced and accused of being unpatriotic or subversive or, in the case of capitalist or fascist nations, “soft on communism.”

Promoting lies and half-truths about a nation's wars has certainly been true of most kingdoms, empires and other totalitarian states, and that includes the Greek and Roman Empires, the British Empire and the various Fascist imperialist powers like Hirohito's Japan, Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany, and it has also been true of almost every American war in recent memory.

Part of the propaganda campaign to falsely glorify American war-making via propaganda was the change in the name of the pre-World War II Department of War to what is now benignly, and falsely, called the Department of Defense. Tellingly, the DOD has been behind many overt wars and hundreds of covert acts of lethal violence, many of which have met the definition of international war crimes and/or crimes against humanity – and none of which have met the Christian Just War Theory precepts.

Lies that Men Kill and Die For

Examples of the “Lies that Men Kill and Die For” would include the following short list of just the last two American wars. In the first Gulf War, President George Herbert Walker Bush lied when he promoted the false testimony of a Kuwaiti girl (actually the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador to the U.S.) who tearfully told a false story about Kuwaiti babies being thrown out of their incubators by cruel Iraqi troops.

A number of other propaganda stories also were soon shown to be lies, but most of us gullible Americans had already bought into the stories and enthusiastically endorsed the U.S.-led military assault to "liberate" Kuwait, led by war correspondents and uber-patriotic retired generals on CNN and all the other major media outlets.

In President George W. Bush's illegal Operation Iraqi Freedom, lies were aggressively spread about 1) Saddam Hussein's Weapons of Mass Destruction (no WMDs were ever found), 2) Hussein's intention (or capability) to build a nuclear weapon (no yellow cake or aluminum centrifuge tubes existed), 3) Hussein's alliance with Osama bin Laden (they hated each other's guts); and 4) Hussein's military threat to the U.S. (none whatsoever). And that was the short list. Bush the Younger also lied about his intention to "liberate" Iraq and form a truly democratic government.

Then for the rest of the late, lamented Cheney/Bush presidency, that cabal lied about the progress of the war. They lied about torture, rendition and the real economic costs of the war, not to mention minimizing the reality of the psychological and physical costs to the returning soldiers. It seemed like that there were more lies told than truths.

Gallipoli and the ANZAC Spirit Myth

Several years ago I saw a Mel Gibson movie titled "Gallipoli," which superficially told the story about the ill-conceived plan to invade Turkey in 1915 during World War I. The plan was hatched by the First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill, who, after realizing that the war had turned into a stalemate in Europe, assigned the British Navy to open a second front against Germany in the East.

The plan was to open sea lanes to the Black Sea (in order to supply Russia with armaments) by invading and conquering Istanbul, one of the choke points in gaining access to the Black Sea. The necessary first step was to occupy the narrow sea lane to the Black Sea, called the Dardanelles Strait, which was bordered on each side by land that was held by Turkey, an ally of Germany.

The Gallipoli peninsula, on the Adriatic side of the Dardanelles, was the initial target of Churchill's invasion plan, and on April 25, 1915, a massive invasion force of mainly British Empire soldiers, including green Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (aka, ANZAC) troops.

It was the first time Australian and New Zealand conscripts had fought a major battle, and they found themselves, on day one, trapped on the beach below machine gun nests of the Turkish army that inflicted massive casualties. 35,000

Anzac troops died in the 10-month campaign, with the troops mostly immobilized and pinned down from the well-protected cliffs above them.

The Gallipoli invasion was an ill-advised logistical nightmare that should have been, but wasn't, seen by the military strategists beforehand.

To really appreciate the truth about the Gallipoli disaster, interested readers should go beyond watching the movie. The real story of the 250,000 total casualties suffered by both sides can be found by googling "Gallipoli Disaster Documentary" and watching the five-part series.

Gallipoli is just another example of yet another shameful episode in the history of warfare that was lied about and/or unreported at the time by the few war correspondents, military leaders and politicians who were either witnesses or accomplices of the disaster but who refused to tell the embarrassing truth. The documentary evidence uncovered by unbiased historians tells a vastly different story than what was told during the war.

And yet, almost a century later, Australia is still in denial about the reality of Gallipoli, and somehow, proudly celebrates the covered-up reality every April 25, the anniversary of the Gallipoli invasion that led to such senseless death.

Down-Under, April 25 is called Australia Day, and the national anthem, "Waltzing Matilda," is played reverentially on that day and often during the rest of the year. Most non-Aussies don't understand the meaning of the lyrics, but they like the catchy tune.

The song lyrics tell a strange tale about a loveless, solitary outback vagabond (whose knapsack he calls "Matilda") who inadvertently poaches a sheep from some One Percenter absentee landowner and then drowns himself in a deep pool when the police are about to arrest him for his "crime." Odd theme for a national anthem that seems more like a drinking song, but it is far easier to sing than "The Star-Spangled Banner."

An internet site says this about the song. The explanation may help to explain what patriotic Aussies call the "Anzac Spirit" (see below for more):

"To non-Australians it must seem strange that this much-loved Australian song does not refer to the land itself, but rather mourns the suicide of a thieving vagabond. Nevertheless, 'Waltzing Matilda' somehow speaks to the strong anti-authoritarian and independence streak in the Australian psyche, as it represents the battler struggling against the wealthy and being one with the Australian bush."

Most Australians have been led to believe in, through repeated propaganda lies

that have obscured the truth over the last century, what they like to call the “Anzac Spirit.” As I understand the concept of the Anzac Spirit, it represents the courage and loyalty to the Crown that the first Anzac infantrymen exhibited in their baptism of fire in 1915, obediently (and blindly) following the suicidal orders of their commanding officers to go “over the top” over and over again into the deadly machine gun fire.

Certainly their misbegotten, almost congenital sense of patriotism was facilitated by the patriotic history book version of WWI, fabricated by nationalist pseudo-historians in order to avert attention from the sad fact that the whole fiasco at Gallipoli was totally unnecessary. Not only that but it was bungled and then misrepresented to avoid the fact that the deaths of the 35,000 Anzac troops were totally in vain.

The following antiwar song, singer-song-writer Eric Brogle’s “The Band Played Waltzing Matilda,” tells the poignant truth about the futility of war and the cognitive dissonance that keeps Aussies focused on the song rather than the many unwelcome truths about war.

It was written in 1971 and provides a “mike check” dose of reality to a world awash in war. It should be listened to with the story of “Johnny Got His Gun” in mind. We Americans could learn a few lessons by searching for similar inconvenient truths about any of our recent military misadventures. They are so numerous as to be uncountable.

The Band Played Waltzing Matilda

By Eric Bogle 1971 – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WG48Ftsr30I>

When I was a young man I carried me pack
And I lived the free life of the rover
From the Murray’s green basin to the dusty outback
I waltzed my Matilda all over

Then in 1915 my country said: “Son,
It’s time to stop rambling, there’s work to be done”
So they gave me a tin hat and they gave me a gun
And they sent me away to the war

And the band played Waltzing Matilda
When the ship pulled away from the quay
And amid all the tears, flag waving and cheers
We sailed off for Gallipoli

Well I remember that terrible day

When our blood stained the sand and the water
And how in that hell they call Suvla Bay
We were butchered like lambs at the slaughter

Johnny Turk, he was ready, he primed himself well
He rained us with bullets, and he showered us with shell
And in five minutes flat, we were all blown to hell
He nearly blew us back home to Australia

And the band played Waltzing Matilda
When we stopped to bury our slain
Well we buried ours and the Turks buried theirs
Then it started all over again

Oh those that were living just tried to survive
In that mad world of blood, death and fire
And for ten weary weeks I kept myself alive
While around me the corpses piled higher
Then a big Turkish shell knocked me arse over head
And when I awoke in me hospital bed
And saw what it had done, I wished I was dead
I never knew there was worse things than dying

Oh no more I'll go Waltzing Matilda
All around the green bush far and near
For to hump tent and pegs, a man needs both legs
No more waltzing Matilda for me

They collected the wounded, the crippled, the maimed
And they shipped us back home to Australia
The armless, the legless, the blind, the insane
Those proud wounded heroes of Suvla

And when the ship pulled into Circular Quay
I looked at the place where me legs used to be
And thank Christ there was no one there waiting for me
To grieve and to mourn and to pity

And the Band played Waltzing Matilda
As they carried us down the gangway
Oh nobody cheered, they just stood and stared
Then they turned all their faces away

And so now every April I sit on my porch
And I watch the parade pass before me

I see my old comrades, how proudly they march
Reviving their dreams of past glories

I see the old men all tired, stiff and worn
Those weary old heroes of a forgotten war
And the young people ask "What are they marching for?"
And I ask myself the same question

And the band plays Waltzing Matilda
And the old men still answer the call
But as year follows year, their numbers disappear
Someday, no one will march there at all

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda
Who'll come a-Waltzing Matilda with me?
And their ghosts may be heard as they march by the billabong
Who'll come a-Waltzing Matilda with me?

Or, as Philip Berrigan, the late Catholic Worker ex-priest and antiwar activist who spent a total of 12 years in jail for his antiwar resistance, once said:

"We're not made by God to mass kill one another, and that's backed up by the Gospels. Lying and war are always associated. Pay attention to the war-makers when they try to defend their current war. If they're moving their lips they're lying."

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Explaining the Unexplainable

Since World War II, the common reaction to the horrendous crimes of the Nazis has been to wonder how such extreme behavior was possible. But the more important point is how the process of killing could be made so mundane, a question that remains relevant today, as Gary G. Kohls explains.

By Gary G. Kohls

A couple of years ago, the iconic sign over the gate to the infamous World War II-era extermination camp at Auschwitz was stolen. (It was later recovered after being found cut into three pieces). At the top of that gate was this classic bit

of Nazi propaganda, proclaimed to the millions of doomed incoming victims: "Arbeit Macht Frei" (Work Makes One Free).

"Arbeit Macht Frei" is a pretty good summary of what is otherwise known as "the Protestant work ethic" that started in Europe during the Protestant Reformation. Right-wing nationalists, anti-communist, pro-capitalist, pro-war, anti-Semitic, racist and religious reformers such as John Calvin and Martin Luther would have agreed that "Arbeit Macht Frei" supported their dogmatic teachings about fulfilling one's patriotic duty to the state, the church or the industry that employed the people.

Following Hitler's fascist takeover and the total destruction of Germany's liberal democratic government in 1933, Germans were indoctrinated to believe that it was their patriotic duty to defend the Nazi's Thousand Year Reich by any means necessary, including laboring, killing or dying for the cause.

Indeed, the efforts instituted by the fascist government (including the abolition of labor unions) resulted in virtually full employment in all of the war-related industries that were set up to ensure the success of the Thousand Year Reich, including the military arts, police, fuel, chemical, agriculture, mining and weapons production. All of these industries thrived with willing, reasonably well-paid and grateful "Good Germans" who blindly applauded Hitler for orchestrating his "economic miracle".

The transportation and communications industries that were essential for war-making – but which were also domestically beneficial – also thrived. Good examples included the building of the Autobahn for rapid troop movement and the increased production of automobiles, including the affordable Volkswagen for the masses and the not-so-affordable Mercedes for the elite.

The provision of cheap mass-produced radios and plenty of entertainment (propaganda) that was overseen by Joseph Goebbels made sure that everybody would be able to hear the demagogues spout their Nazi propaganda demonizing non-Aryan foreigners, Jews and various anti-fascist leftists, such as trade unionists, socialists, liberals and subversive antiwar activists.

Little more than a decade earlier, in 1922, hyperinflation, joblessness and hunger had followed the fiasco of World War I. Then, just as the economy was recovering, the Wall Street Stock Market crash of 1929 sealed German democracy's doom.

So, after Hitler was appointed to the Chancellorship in 1933, even many of the most ethical Germans were thankful for the war industry work, and they liked the state-sponsored (socialized) medical care, educational opportunities and the

paid vacations of Hitler's "Strength Through Joy" campaign, even though there was essentially no freedom of movement in the labor market.

'Good German' Christians

Until Hitler started occupying, colonizing and brutalizing other nations, things were going well for most obedient, white "Good German" Christians. Not so for non-Christians and other minorities who were suffering under the police-state jackboot of Prussian militarism.

"Good Germans" dutifully averted their eyes and closed their ears to keep from seeing the hateful anti-Semitism, racism, homophobia, sexism, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination that were happening all around them, including the aggressive building of concentration camps all over Germany and the occupied territories.

The Nazi concentration camps started in 1938 at Dachau. The scores of concentration camps that eventually dotted Germany's military empire (especially occupied Poland) also provided a lot of work for Hitler's obedient (and silenced) Volk, for each camp needed, in addition to the SS troops and Gestapo (who beat any resister into submission), numerous citizen-workers to keep them running smoothly.

The notorious extermination camp at Auschwitz employed 60 physicians and 300 nurses and many other ancillary staff members for just the medical facility, much of which was involved in human experimentation. Many of the people involved in those crimes against humanity were professed Christians.

The gulag of camps was good for the economy, though, for each of the camps was aligned with very profitable German corporations, whose bottom lines flourished with the cheap labor costs. The prison camps played a major role in Hitler's economic boom. Germany's Gross National Product grew substantially, for the labor was free and the food and lodging expenditures were minimal.

Auschwitz was located in Poland, far away from the eyes of most Germans back in the homeland. It was the most infamous of the camps, but the German occupiers of the newly acquired Polish territories knew what was going on inside. Still, most "Good Germans" averted their eyes and ears and noses. Most of them claimed that they were unaware that mass murder was happening on the other side of the electrified fences.

But it was a time of war and telling the truth in wartime is always a revolutionary act that requires a lot of courage. Witnessing to the truth in a time of war is also frequently regarded by military regimes as an act of treason. And so the Volk lied to themselves and to others.

Cognitive dissonance happened in Nazi Germany, although there was no such phrase back then that described the conscious or unconscious denial of and confusion about unwelcome new truths that contradicted deeply held beliefs. But the truth was obvious to all. Only one conclusion could be drawn from the 24/7 stench of burning flesh and the red smoke that came out of the crematorium's tall stacks of each of the extermination camps.

After the total collapse of the militarists, financiers, investors and industrialists who had been behind Germany's attempts to steal the resources of Europe and Asia (especially the oil fields of Eastern Europe and western Russia), more unwelcome truths were to be revealed. Among these revelations was the story of the commandant of Auschwitz, Rudolf Hoess (not to be confused with Rudolf Hess who was Hitler's # 2 early in the Nazi regime).

Cruelty in Child-Rearing

The Rudolf Hoess, MD, of Auschwitz infamy was the son of a devout, well-to-do, conservative Roman Catholic family that had wanted him to go into the priesthood. But circumstances were such that he instead chose to serve Hitler in the thuggish Freikorps, that group of traumatized and unemployable World War I veterans who became his street fighters and mercenary soldiers and who believed the lie that leftists, especially Jews, socialists and communists on the home front had "stabbed Germany in the back" and were the real cause of the humiliating defeat in the trenches on the Western Front.

Just like most men who grew up in authoritarian Europe, Hoess learned unconditional obedience to authority early in his life. Cruelty in child-rearing, especially in males, usually elicits the unconscious desire for vengeance, often only acted upon in a delayed fashion, frequently against a scapegoat rather than against the original perpetrator of the cruelty, which is usually an abusive parent-figure.

Harshness in child-rearing was the norm for most German and Austrian children for centuries prior to Hitler, whose regime also promoted punitive child-rearing methods. It makes for vicious, obedient Nazi soldiers or, for that matter, Special Forces soldiers in any country.

Such "parenting" was reinforced by the similarly harsh discipline that was often practiced in most German churches and schools – and not just in Catholic schools, but in secular schools as well. And so Hoess wrote the following explanation for his willingness to reflexively carry out the decidedly un-Christ-like – indeed, satanic – orders he received from his superiors:

“Above all, I was constantly reminded that I was to comply with, and follow, the wishes or commands of parents, teachers, priests, etc., indeed all grown-ups including the servants, and that I was to allow nothing to distract me from that duty. Whatever they said, went. These fundamental values of my upbringing became part of my flesh and blood.” [See Alice Miller’s *Breaking Down the Wall of Silence*.]

This is how military recruits in basic training internalize the killing arts. So it should come as no surprise when soldiers react automatically and violently in the war zone, obeying even illegal orders given in the kill-or-be-killed chaos of the battlefield. After the psychological trauma, humiliation and threats of punishment experienced in their child-rearing, school yards, mean streets or their basic training, soldiers can be relied upon to react automatically, even unconsciously, and do what they have been indoctrinated to do when their own physical survival is threatened.

Duty and honor; solemn oaths of allegiance to a flag (the Swastika or the Stars and Stripes); obedience to god and country; patriotism; nationalism; “America # 1” and “Deutschland Uber Alles” are common examples that will promote the blind patriotism that has driven the killing machines on all sides of every war throughout the entire history of warfare.

Internalizing such propaganda allowed Hoess to perform his gruesome “duties” at Auschwitz, without any obvious signs of remorse when he was later tried, convicted and hanged for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The baptized Lutheran Adolph Eichmann, a contemporary of Hoess’s, also reacted without remorse during his trial in Jerusalem long after the war, as did most of the other defendants at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial.

Consequences of Violence

Sadly, the soldier-victims (willing or unwilling) of chronic brainwashing (which can easily create robotic humans willing to inflict pain on others) learn much too late that being involved in state-sponsored terrorism, directly or indirectly, can also be lethal to their souls and psyches, not to mention the souls and psyches of their battlefield victims (and loved ones when they come home), all of whom are mostly innocent, unarmed and decidedly defenseless women and children.

The invisible spiritual wounds of the warrior can also be experienced by another group: the guilty bystander, who witnessed the violence and then may have stood silently by, doing nothing to stop it. The guilt felt later for not intervening (or feeling helpless to intervene) often becomes too much to bear, with the

resultant depression, anxiety, anger, insomnia, nightmares, flashbacks, drug use, homicidality and suicidality of combat-induced posttraumatic stress disorder symptom, often identical to that experienced by the guilty perpetrator.

One has to wonder what kind of Christianity is it that promotes harshness in parenting, racism, discriminatory attitudes toward the “enemy-other, and pro-war theologies. And what kind of Christianity remains silent about its country’s extrajudicial assassinations by drone warfare or the manufacturing, stockpiling, and training to use, the lethal weapons that are only intended for human destruction?

From where in the human soul comes the willingness to kill, torture and cooperate with the evils of state-sponsored homicide and economic oppression, irrespective of what militarized nation one lives in, fascist/capitalist Germany or “democratic”/capitalist America?

As Bob Dylan asks so poignantly in his classic antiwar song, “Blowin’ in the Wind”: “How many times must the cannonballs fly before they’re forever banned?” “How many ears must one man have before he can hear people cry?” “How many deaths will it take till he knows that too many people have died?” “How many years can some people exist before they’re allowed to be free?” “And how many times can a man turn his head pretending he just doesn’t see?”

The answers aren’t really mysteriously blowing in the wind. The answers to the questions about why there is an epidemic of violence instead of sustained peace are understandable and therefore preventable.

The solutions to the problems (and the prevention of the consequences) concerning both military and domestic violence lie in whether or not children and recruits are treated humanely (with unconditional love and mercy) or with brutality and/or neglect in their families, schools, churches, neighborhoods, workplaces and streets.

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Thanksgiving or Day of Mourning?

For many Americans, Thanksgiving is a time of family get-togethers around a traditional turkey dinner, with vague recollections of Pilgrims sharing a meal with Native Americans in eastern Massachusetts nearly four centuries ago. But

for the remnants of those indigenous tribes, it is a time for mourning, Gary G. Kohls writes.

By Gary G. Kohls

We Thanksgiving turkey-celebrating, morbidly obese, football-loving, shop-until-you-drop, pink-skinned American couch potatoes (“pink”, and therefore, in one way of thinking, we are not white but are actually people of color) are all beneficiaries of our guilty ancestors who were the actual perpetrators of crimes against humanity.

We are witnessing the never-ending, 500-year-long history of ethnic cleansing, colonizing and enslavement of the aboriginal tribes that inhabited North, Central and South America before Columbus’s sex-starved sailors stumbled upon the sandy shores and immediately started raping the land and the most nubile female inhabitants.

And, what should be even more sobering, Columbus’s acts of genocide against the aboriginal peoples pre-dated, by a couple of hundred years, very similar crimes against humanity in the murderous slave trade that victimized millions of black Africans, many of whom died, in chains, before they even arrived on the shores of this “promised land.”

In many cases the gold-hungry marauders, including the psychopathic killer-conquistadors who soon followed, were initially welcomed, tolerated and even nurtured – rather than being killed off.

Trusting the pinks to return their hospitality in the spirit of the Golden Rule, turned out to have been a huge mistake, for within decades the slaughter began, performed in the name of Christ – with the blessings of the accompanying priests whose mission was to convert the heathen under threat of death – into Christianity. Hence viewing Thanksgiving Day as really the Day of Mourning.

Most of our pink ancestors were greatly enriched by the U.S. Army’s massacres, the occupation and theft of the land of the aboriginal tribes, the exploitation of their resources, the colonization, the enslavement and the destruction of their way of life.

We pinks have been cunningly conditioned to believe way too many myths about our history. Thanks to our censored-out history books and the myths learned in Sunday School over the past few centuries, we have been led to believe the story about the “nice” Pilgrims who landed at Plymouth Rock in 1620 and gratefully put on a feast for their new friendly neighbors (who were soon to be driven off the land and annihilated by the Puritans and others who soon followed).

The disinformation process about the first Thanksgiving (and the holidays that happen every fourth Thursday of November), has been designed to absolve our European ancestor-conquerors of guilt for the cruel bloodbaths that were perpetrated by the U.S. military upon many militarily weaker groups and nations throughout history.

Popular culture has essentially re-named Thanksgiving Day (the once sacred holiday) "Turkey Day," with no objections from anybody that I know. Similarly, there has been no significant objections [except for Veterans for Peace] to re-naming – and re-purposing the traditional Armistice Day [Nov 11], which originally marked the day of the cease-fire that ended WWI, "the war to end all wars", changing it to Veteran's Day, which now celebrates warriors and their wars.

Such historical revisionism is totally congruent with America's counter-Christian consumer culture. Turkey Day is followed immediately by the equally anti-Christic "shop 'til you drop Black Friday." Enough said.

Just like the famous Oriental monkeys sculpted with their hands over eyes, ears and mouth (which symbolized, in the original Chinese, the cowardly stance of "seeing no truth, hearing no truth and therefore speaking no truth"), the reality of the First Thanksgiving has been almost totally censored out of the history books by the book writers who taught the historically illiterate (or simply unaware?).

And so the myths trudge on, with no objections, with only transitory alerts from whistle-blowers and from others who don't have anything more to lose, such as Native Americans like Frank B. James, aka Wamsutta.

James was a member of the now nearly extinct Wampanoag Indian tribe, the tribe that first encountered the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock. Here are excerpts from James's un-uttered Sept. 10, 1970, speech, which was supposed to be delivered in Plymouth, Massachusetts, but instead was suppressed. (The entire speech can be read at: <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article21333.htm>) First some background:

The Massachusetts Department of Commerce had asked the Wampanoag Indians to select a speaker to mark the 350th anniversary of the Pilgrims' arrival, and the first Thanksgiving.

Three hundred fifty years after the Pilgrims began their invasion of the land of the Wampanoag, their "American" descendants planned an anniversary celebration. Still clinging to the white schoolbook myth of friendly relations between their forefathers and the Wampanoag, the anniversary planners thought it would be nice

to have an Indian make an appreciative and complimentary speech at their state dinner.

Frank James was asked to speak at the celebration. He accepted. The planners, however, asked to see his speech in advance of the occasion, and it turned out that Frank James' views, based on history rather than mythology, were not what the Pilgrims' descendants wanted to hear. Frank James refused to deliver a speech written by a public relations person. James did not speak at the anniversary celebration. If he had spoken, this is what he would have said:

I speak to you as a man – a Wampanoag Man. I am a proud man, proud of my ancestry, my accomplishments won by a strict parental direction (“You must succeed – your face is a different color in this small Cape Cod community!”). I am a product of poverty and discrimination from these two social and economic diseases. I, and my brothers and sisters, have painfully overcome, and to some extent we have earned the respect of our community. We are Indians first – but we are termed “good citizens.” Sometimes we are arrogant but only because society has pressured us to be so.

It is with mixed emotion that I stand here to share my thoughts. This is a time of celebration for you – celebrating an anniversary of a beginning for the white man in America. A time of looking back, of reflection. It is with a heavy heart that I look back upon what happened to my People.

Even before the Pilgrims landed it was common practice for explorers to capture Indians, take them to Europe and sell them as slaves for 220 shillings apiece. The Pilgrims had hardly explored the shores of Cape Cod for four days before they had robbed the graves of my ancestors and stolen their corn and beans.

Massasoit, the great Sachem of the Wampanoag, knew these facts, yet he and his People welcomed and befriended the settlers of the Plymouth Plantation. Perhaps he did this because his Tribe had been depleted by an epidemic. Or his knowledge of the harsh oncoming winter was the reason for his peaceful acceptance of these acts.

This action by Massasoit was perhaps our biggest mistake. We, the Wampanoag, welcomed you, the white man, with open arms, little knowing that it was the beginning of the end; that before 50 years were to pass, the Wampanoag would no longer be a free people.

What happened in those short 50 years? What has happened in the last 300 years? History gives us facts and there were atrocities; there were broken promises – and most of these centered around land ownership. Among ourselves we understood

that there were boundaries, but never before had we had to deal with fences and stone walls. But the white man had a need to prove his worth by the amount of land that he owned.

Only ten years later, when the Puritans came, they treated the Wampanoag with even less kindness in converting the souls of the so-called "savages." Although the Puritans were harsh to members of their own society, the Indian was pressed between stone slabs and hanged as quickly as any other "witch."

And so down through the years there is record after record of Indian lands taken and with reservations set up for him upon which to live. The Indian, having been stripped of his power, could only stand by and watch while the white man took his land and used it for his personal gain.

This the Indian could not understand; for to him, land was survival, to farm, to hunt, to be enjoyed. It was not to be abused. We see incident after incident, where the white man sought to tame the "savage" and convert him to the Christian ways of life. The early Pilgrim settlers led the Indian to believe that if he did not behave, they would dig up the ground and unleash the great epidemic again.

The white man used the Indian's nautical skills and abilities. They let him be only a seaman – but never a captain. Time and time again, in the white man's society, we Indians have been termed "low man on the totem pole."

Has the Wampanoag really disappeared? There is still an aura of mystery. We know there was an epidemic that took many Indian lives – some Wampanoags moved west and joined the Cherokee and Cheyenne. They were forced to move. Some even went north to Canada! Many Wampanoag put aside their Indian heritage and accepted the white man's way for their own survival.

History wants us to believe that the Indian was a savage, illiterate, uncivilized animal. A history that was written by an organized, disciplined people, to expose us as an unorganized and undisciplined entity. Two distinctly different cultures met. One thought they must control life; the other believed life was to be enjoyed, because nature decreed it.

Let us remember, the Indian is and was just as human as the white man. The Indian feels pain, gets hurt, and becomes defensive, has dreams, bears tragedy and failure, suffers from loneliness, needs to cry as well as laugh. He, too, is often misunderstood.

The white man in the presence of the Indian is still mystified by his uncanny ability to make him feel uncomfortable. This may be the image the white man has created of the Indian; his "savageness" has boomeranged and isn't a mystery; it

is fear.

High on a hill, overlooking the famed Plymouth Rock, stands the statue of our great Sachem, Massasoit. Massasoit has stood there many years in silence. We the descendants of this great Sachem have been a silent people. The necessity of making a living in this materialistic society of the white man caused us to be silent.

Although time has drained our culture, and our language is almost extinct, we the Wampanoags still walk the lands of Massachusetts. We may be fragmented, we may be confused. Many years have passed since we have been a people together. Our lands were invaded. We fought as hard to keep our land as you whites did to take our land away from us. We were conquered, we became the American prisoners of war in many cases, and wards of the United States Government, until only recently.

Our spirit refuses to die. Yesterday we walked the woodland paths and sandy trails. Today we must walk the macadam highways and roads. We are uniting. We are standing not in our wigwams but in your concrete tent. We stand tall and proud, and before too many moons pass we'll right the wrongs we have allowed to happen to us.

We forfeited our country. Our lands have fallen into the hands of the aggressor. We have allowed the white man to keep us on our knees. What has happened cannot be changed, but today we must work towards a more humane America, a more Indian America, where men and nature once again are important; where the Indian values of honor, truth, and brotherhood prevail.

You the white man are celebrating an anniversary. We the Wampanoags will help you celebrate in the concept of a beginning. It was the beginning of a new life for the Pilgrims. Now, 350 years later it is a beginning of a new determination for the original American: the American Indian.

We now have 350 years of experience living amongst the white man. We can now speak his language. We can now think as a white man thinks. We can now compete with him for the top jobs. We're being heard; we are now being listened to. The important point is that along with these necessities of everyday living, we still have the spirit, we still have the unique culture, we still have the will and, most important of all, the determination to remain as Indians. We are determined, and our presence here this evening is living testimony that this is only the beginning of the American Indian, particularly the Wampanoag, to regain the position in this country that is rightfully ours.

Though James was not allowed to give his speech in 1970, a plaque on Cole's

Hill, overlooking Plymouth Rock, reads:

“Since 1970, Native Americans have gathered at noon on Cole’s Hill in Plymouth to commemorate a National Day of Mourning on the US Thanksgiving holiday. Many Native Americans do not celebrate the arrival of the Pilgrims and other European settlers.

“To them, Thanksgiving Day is a reminder of the genocide of millions of their people, the theft of their lands, and the relentless assault on their culture. Participants in a National Day of Mourning honor Native ancestors and the struggles of Native peoples to survive today. It is a day of remembrance and spiritual connection as well as a protest of the racism and oppression which Native Americans continue to experience.”

Gary G. Kohls, MD, is a founding member of Every Church A Peace Church (www.ecapc.org) and is a member of a local non-denominational affiliate of ECAPC, the Community of the Third Way.

Hiroshima and Historical Truth

On the 50th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, historians at the Smithsonian tried to present a truthful accounting of that U.S. decision-making but were stopped by right-wing politicians led by then-House Speaker Newt Gingrich who insisted on maintaining comforting myths, recalls Gary G. Kohls.

By Gary G. Kohls

Last week was the 67th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the whole truth of which has been heavily censored and mythologized starting with the news of the event that created understandable joy because of the end of that awful war.

Most Americans took in, as gospel truth, the heavily edited stories about the end of the war. To the average American, the war’s end was such a relief that there was no questioning. For many soldiers who were particularly war-weary, no moral questions were raised regarding the justification of using atomic bombs.

The immediate history was written by the victors, of course, with no balancing input from the losing side. But, several decades later, after intensive research by unbiased historians, we now know that the patriotic narrative contained a lot of false information, often orchestrated by war-justifying militarists –

starting with General Douglas MacArthur.

MacArthur, aka “the American Caesar,” successfully imposed near total censorship of what really happened at Ground Zero. One of his first acts after taking over as viceroy of Japan was to confiscate and/or destroy all the unpleasant photographic evidence documenting the horrors of the atomic bombings.

In 1995, the Smithsonian Institute was preparing to correct the pseudo-patriotic myths by staging an honest, historically accurate 50th anniversary display exploring all sides of the atomic bombings. This provoked serious right-wing reactionary outrage from veterans groups and other “patriot” groups, including House Speaker Newt Gingrich from the GOP-dominated Congress.

The Smithsonian felt compelled to remove all of the contextually important aspects of the story, especially the bomb-related civilian atrocity stories. So again we had another example of powerful politically-motivated groups that falsified history because of a fear that “unpatriotic” truths, albeit historical, would contradict their deeply held beliefs, an intolerable psychological situation for many blindered super-patriots.

The Smithsonian historians did have a gun to their heads, of course, but in the melee, the mainstream media – and their easily brain-washable consumers of propaganda – ignored a vital historical point. And that is this: the war could have ended as early as the spring of 1945 without the August atomic bombings, and therefore there could have averted the three-month bloody battle of Okinawa that resulted in the deaths of thousands of American Marines with tens of thousands of Japanese military casualties and uncounted thousands of Okinawan civilian casualties.

In addition, if the efforts had succeeded at ending the war via early Japanese efforts for an armistice, there would have been no need for the atomic bombs nor for an American land invasion – the basis of the subsequent propaganda campaign that retroactively justified the use of the bombs.

President Harry Truman was fully aware of Japan’s search for ways to honorably surrender months before the fateful order to incinerate, without warning, the defenseless women, children and elderly people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who had not been given a choice by their militarist, fascist government about going to war..

That top-secret intelligence data, de-classified in the 1980s, showed that the contingency plans for a two-stage US invasion of the mainland (the first one no sooner than Nov. 1, 1945, and the second one in the spring of 1946) would have been unnecessary.

Japan was working on peace negotiations through its Moscow ambassador as early as April of 1945 when the battle of Okinawa was just starting. Harry Hopkins, President Truman's close adviser, was aware of Japan's desire for an armistice. He cabled the president from Moscow, saying: "Japan is doomed and the Japanese know it. Peace feelers are being put out by certain elements in Japan."

Truman's team knew of these and other developments because the U.S. had broken the Japanese code years earlier, and U.S. intelligence was intercepting all of Japan's military and diplomatic messages. On July 13, 1945, Foreign Minister Togo said: "Unconditional surrender (giving up all sovereignty, thereby deposing Hirohito, the Emperor god) is the only obstacle to peace."

What Did Truman Know?

Since Truman and his advisers knew about these efforts, the war could have ended through diplomacy, first with a cease-fire and then a negotiated peace, by simply conceding a post-war figurehead position for the emperor Hirohito who was regarded as a deity in Japan.

That reasonable concession was – seemingly illogically – refused by the U.S. in demands for "unconditional surrender," which was initially put forward at the 1943 Casablanca Conference between U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and reiterated at the Potsdam Conference (July 1945) between Truman, Churchill and Soviet leader Josef Stalin.

When General MacArthur heard about the demand for unconditional surrender, he was appalled. He recommended dropping that demand to facilitate the process of ending the war peacefully. William Manchester, in his biography of MacArthur, *American Caesar*, wrote: "Had the General's advice been followed, the resort to atomic weapons at Hiroshima and Nagasaki might have been unnecessary."

Even Secretary of War Henry Stimson said: "the true question was not whether surrender could have been achieved without the use of the bomb but whether a different diplomatic and military course would have led to an earlier surrender. A large segment of the Japanese cabinet was ready in the spring of 1945 to accept substantially the same terms as those finally agreed on."

In other words, Stimson felt that the U.S. prolonged the war, including the battle for Okinawa, and could have made using the bombs unnecessary if it had engaged in honest negotiations.

Shortly after WWII, military analyst Hanson Baldwin wrote: "The Japanese, in a military sense, were in a hopeless strategic situation by the time the Potsdam Declaration (insisting on Japan's unconditional surrender) was made."

Admiral William Leahy, top military aide to President Truman, said in his war memoirs, *I Was There*: "It is my opinion that the use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender because of the effective sea blockade and the successful bombing with conventional weapons. My own feeling is that in being the first to use it, we had adopted an ethical standard common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages."

And General Dwight D. Eisenhower, in a personal visit to President Truman a couple of weeks before the bombings, urged him not to use the atomic bombs. Eisenhower said: "It wasn't necessary to hit them with that awful thing . . . to use the atomic bomb, to kill and terrorize civilians, without even attempting [negotiations], was a double crime."

Yet, after the bombings of Aug. 6 and 9, the "unconditional" surrender terms were quietly dropped. The emperor was allowed to remain in place as spiritual head of Japan, the very condition that made the Japanese leadership refuse to accept the humiliating "unconditional surrender" terms.

So the two essential questions that need answering (to figure out what was going on behind the scenes) are these: 1) Why did the U.S. refuse to accept Japan's only concession concerning their surrender (Japan's ability to retain their emperor) and 2) with the end of the war in the Pacific already a certainty, why were the bombs still used?

The Decision

Scholars have determined that there were a number of factors that contributed to Truman's decision to use the bombs.

–The U.S had made a huge investment in time, mind and money (a massive \$2 billion in 1940 dollars) to produce three bombs, and there was no inclination – and no guts – to stop the momentum.

–The U.S. military and political leadership not to mention most war-weary Americans – had a tremendous appetite for revenge because of the surprise attack at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. Of course, mercy isn't a consideration for any wartime military force, and that includes the U.S. military. The only factor to be considered was ending the war by any means necessary, no matter what methods are used.

So, in the elation of the end-of-war moment, the public asked no questions and no explanations were demanded by the relieved citizens who quite willingly accepted the propaganda that justified the hideous end.

National security typically allows indeed, demands stealing, cheating and lying about what really happens at the ground zeroes of history. The absurd old saying that "all's fair in love and war" applies most emphatically to war.

–The fissionable material in Hiroshima's bomb was uranium and Nagasaki's was plutonium. Scientific curiosity about the differences between the two weapons was a significant factor that pushed the project to its completion.

The Manhattan Project scientists and the U.S. Army director of the project, General Leslie Groves, wanted answers to a multitude of questions raised by the project, including "what would happen if an entire city was leveled by a single nuclear bomb?" The decision to use both bombs had been made well in advance of August 1945. Harry Truman did not specifically order the bombing of Nagasaki.

The three-day interval between the two bombs was unconscionably short. Japan's communications and transportation capabilities were in shambles, and no one, either the U.S. military or the Japanese high command, fully understood what had happened at Hiroshima, particularly the short-term or long-term after effects of the radiation. The Manhattan Project was so top secret that even MacArthur had been kept out of the loop until a few days before Hiroshima was reduced to ashes.

–The Russians had proclaimed their intent to enter the war with Japan 90 days after V-E Day (Victory in Europe Day, May 8, 1945), which would have been Aug. 8, two days after Hiroshima was bombed. Indeed, America's Russian allies did declare war on Japan on Aug. 8 and were advancing eastward across Manchuria, eager to reclaim territories lost to Japan in the 1904-05 Russo-Japanese War.

The U.S. didn't want Japan surrendering to Russia (soon to be the only other superpower and a future enemy) so the first nuclear threat "messages" of the Cold War were "sent," loud and clear.

Russia indeed received far less of the spoils of war than they had hoped for, and the two superpowers were instantly and deeply mired in the arms-race stalemate that eventually resulted in their mutual moral (and fiscal) bankruptcies that occurred a generation or two later.

The Reality

An estimated 80,000 innocent, defenseless civilians, plus 20,000 essentially weaponless young Japanese conscripts died instantly in the Hiroshima bombing. Hundreds of thousands more suffered slow deaths from agonizing burns, radiation sickness, leukemia and virtually untreatable infections for the rest of their shortened lives; and generations of the survivor's progeny were doomed to suffer horrific radiation-induced illnesses, cancers and premature deaths that are

still on-going at this very hour.

Another sobering reality that has been covered up is the fact that 12 American Navy pilots, their existence well known to U.S. command, were instantly incinerated in the Hiroshima jail on Aug. 6, 1945.

The 75,000 victims who died in the huge fireball at Nagasaki on Aug. 9 were virtually all civilians, except for the inhabitants of an Allied POW camp near Nagasaki's ground zero. They were instantly liquefied, carbonized and/or vaporized by an experimental weapon of mass destruction that was executed by obedient, unaware scientists and soldiers, and blessed by Christian military chaplains who were just doing their duty.

The War Department knew of the existence of the Nagasaki POWs and, when reminded of that fact before the B-29 fleet embarked on the mission, simply replied: "Targets previously assigned for Centerboard (code name for the Kokura/Nagasaki mission) remain unchanged."

To obscure some of these unpleasant truths, the official War Department/National Security State-approved version of the end of the war in the Pacific contained a new batch of myths that took their places among the long lists of myths by which nations make war. And such half-truth versions are still standard operating procedure that are continuously fed to us by the corporate, military, political and media opinion leaders that are the war-makers and war profiteers of the world.

The well-honed propaganda of the war machine manufactures glory out of inglorious gruesomeness, as we have witnessed in the censored reportage of the U.S. military invasions and occupations of sovereign nations like North Korea, Iran, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, the Philippines, Chile, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, Haiti, Colombia, Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc, etc. And this list doesn't even start to uncover the uncountable Pentagon/CIA covert operations and assassination plots in the rest of the known world.

But somehow most of us Americans still hang on to a shaky "my country right or wrong" patriotism, desperately wanting to believe the cunningly-orchestrated myths that say that the war-profiteering 1 percent, the exploitive ruling elite and the "chicken hawk" politicians, military leaders and media talking heads that are in their employ, only work for peace, justice, equality, liberty and spreading democracy.

While it is true that the U.S. military has faced down the occasional despot (usually the ones who won't cooperate with the "interests" of the 1 percent), we

remain blind to the fact that America has historically supported right-wing fascist dictatorships that make the world unsafe for democracy all the while ensuring easy access for vulture capitalists, high finance, multinational corporations and other exploiters to be able to do their dirty work.

The justification of the atrocities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are symbolic of the brain-washing that goes on in all “total wars,” which always result in mass human slaughter known as “collateral damage” and “friendly fire.”

It might already be too late to rescue and resuscitate a more humanitarian, peace-loving America. It might be too late to effectively confront the corporate hijacking of liberal democracy in America. It might be too late to successfully bring down the arrogant and greedy ruling elites who are selfishly exploiting the resources of the world and dragging the planet and its creatures down the road to destruction.

But there is always hope. Rather than being silent about the wars that ruthless warmongers are provoking all over the planet (with the very willing pushes by the Pentagon, the weapons industry and their conservative lapdogs in Congress), people of conscience need to ramp up their resistance and teach the truth of history, in spite of the painful lessons that will be revealed.

We need to start owning up to the uncountable war crimes that have been hidden from history, including the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And then we need to go to the streets, publicly protesting and courageously refusing to cooperate with those who are transforming America into a criminal rogue nation that will eventually be targeted for its downfall by the billions of suffering victims outside our borders, just as happened to Nazi Germany and Fascist Japan.

Doing what is right for the whole of humanity for a change, rather than just doing what is profitable or advantageous for our over-privileged, over-consumptive and unsustainable American way of life, would be real honor, real patriotism and an essential start toward real peace.

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The Darkness of August 9

During World War II, Aug. 9 came to represent varying barbarities inflicted on innocent civilians, from the gassing of a Jewish Carmelite nun to the beheading

of a German Christian war protester to the incineration of a Japanese city with a historic Christian church as Ground Zero, Gary G. Kohls writes.

By Gary G. Kohls

Seventy years ago this week, the Jewish Carmelite nun Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross was murdered, killed on Aug. 9, 1942, by fellow German Christians at Auschwitz.

Born Edith Stein on Oct. 12, 1891, she was a contemporary of Adolf Hitler, who was two years older. She was the youngest child of an Orthodox Jewish woman whose husband died suddenly when Edith was a toddler.

Stein was a remarkable German Jewish feminist scholar who titled her PhD thesis "On the Problem of Empathy." She was a Red Cross nurse during the bloody 1914-1918 "war to end all wars" and was inspired to convert to Roman Catholicism shortly after reading the autobiography of St. Teresa of Avila in 1921.

She was a popular lecturer for the German Catholic feminist movement during the Weimar years and felt called to become a Carmelite nun after the anti-Semitic Adolf Hitler took power in 1933. When she entered the Carmel at Cologne, Stein became Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

During the 14 years of the Weimar Republic, which began at the end of World War I, Stein became increasingly alarmed at the growing viciousness of German anti-Semitism. She tried unsuccessfully to warn the Vatican about the trend.

Despite her entry into the cloistered community at Cologne, the Nazis once in power after the Weimar Republic collapsed never forgot about her Jewish roots and her liberal inclinations. She fled Germany, but was hunted down by the Gestapo in Holland and sent to Auschwitz, along with her sister Rosa who had also become a Carmelite nun.

They were transported across Germany by box car in the heat of summer, arriving on Aug. 9, 1942. The sisters were immediately sent to the gas chambers. Their bodies were dumped in a mass grave, later to be exhumed so that the corpses could be incinerated in industrial-strength ovens that had not yet been installed in 1942.

"Gott Mit Uns" (God with us) was stamped on the belt buckles of the German Christian soldiers who made the trip go cheaply and efficiently all the way to the gas chambers. Those soldiers were simply following their orders to arrest, brutalize, transport and murder Jews and others whom their elite leaders considered subhuman. Gassing undesirables, without benefit of a jury trial, had

been made legal by Hitler and his henchmen.

Tragically, most German Christian leaders during the pre-Nazi and Hitler years with the exception of a very small minority of courageous resisters had, at least by their silence if not their active support, endorsed the fascist, anti-Christian nationalism, militarism, racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, homophobia and the legal right of the ruling elite to kill the enemies of the state.

In 1998, Teresa Benedicta of the Cross was sainted in the Catholic Church.

Franz Jaegerstatter, Another Aug. 9 Victim

On Aug. 9, 1943, Franz Jaegerstatter, a devout Catholic pacifist from Austria, was murdered by German Christians for refusing to comply with Hitler's conscription order to "serve" in the German army. He was one of a handful of known Catholic conscientious objectors to war known to have exercised their consciences and oppose the draft during the Hitler era.

Because of Jaegerstatter's explicitly expressed, gospel-based, conscientious objection to war, he had been abandoned by his priest and bishop, as well as by his family and friends, all of whom had tried and failed to get him to understand that it was his patriotic duty to kill for "Volk, Fuhrer und Vaterland."

His spiritual advisers had tried and failed to convince him that his commitment to gospel nonviolence was futile – and fatal, given the nationalistic militarism operating at the time. Instead, being obedient to Jesus's ethical teachings about nonviolence and the God of love (rather than to men), he refused to recant of his beliefs.

Consequently, Jaegerstatter was beheaded at Brandenburg Prison on Aug. 9, 1943. Among his executioners were obedient baptized Christian soldiers whose belt buckles also read "Gott Mit Uns."

The Bombing of Nagasaki

On Aug. 9, 1945, an all-Christian bomber crew, flying a B-29 Super Fortress that had been christened "Bock's Car," took off from Tinian Island in the South Pacific, with the blessings of their Catholic and Protestant chaplains.

In the plane's hold was the second of the only nuclear bombs to ever be used against civilian cities containing innocent humans. The primary target – Kokura, Japan – was clouded over, so Bock's Car headed for the secondary target, Nagasaki.

St. Mary's Cathedral, located in Nagasaki City's Urakami River district, was a

massive building, one of the few structures in Nagasaki that was visible from 31,000 feet. It was one of the landmarks that the Bock's Car's bombardier had been briefed on for weeks before the mission. The cathedral was briefly seen through a break in the clouds, and the drop was ordered. The bomb exploded in a searing fireball as hot as the sun 500 meters above the church.

The Urakami Cathedral was the oldest and largest Christian church in the Orient, and Nagasaki had the oldest, largest and most influential Christian community in Japan, which was founded by the Jesuit missionary, Francis Xavier, in 1549.

The Nagasaki Christian community is legendary in the history of Japanese Christianity because of its secret, catacomb-like survival during two centuries of murderous persecutions by the Imperial Japanese government. Mass crucifixions took place in the early 1600s, with the banning, torturing and killing of devout Christians who refused to give up the faith.

Despite the persecutions and the formal outlawing of the religion (it was a capital crime to be a Christian in Japan for over two centuries), Nagasaki Christianity survived and ultimately flourished – until 11:02 a.m., Aug. 9, 1945.

The Nagasaki Christians who lived in the vicinity of the church did not survive. Six thousand of the church's members were killed instantly, including all of the parishioners and priests who were attending mass that morning. Of the 12,000 members of the church, 8,500 eventually died because of the bomb. Three orders of nuns and a Catholic girl's school were wiped out instantly.

Tens of thousands of others, mostly non-Christians, also died the day the bomb hit. Hundreds of thousands were mortally wounded, some in a state of lingering death that lasted for days, weeks, months or years. Radiation-induced disease and deformity among the "surviving" victims and their progeny continues to this day as a gruesome testament to the horrors of nuclear war.

What Imperial Japan could not do to Nagasaki Christianity over a period of 250 years – annihilate it – fellow Christians from America did in nine seconds. The Cathedral was totally destroyed and thousands of Nagasaki Christians were instantly boiled, incinerated, carbonized and vaporized into nothingness.

In my library, I have a picture of an irradiated crucifix that was photographed in the days following the blast, lying helplessly on its back, a deeply profound symbol of a religion gone wrong.

Blessing the Nagasaki Mission

Just before the Nagasaki mission on Aug. 9, 1945, Lutheran Chaplain William B.

Downey of Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, prayed for the safety of the crew and for world peace.

Downey and his colleague, Father George Zabelka, were the two chaplains attached to the U.S. Army Air Force's 509th Composite Group, whose major responsibility on Tinian was the delivery of the atomic bombs. Neither chaplain was aware of the terrible destructiveness of the secret "gimmick" weapons.

But they were just two of many millions of people adversely influenced by societal attitudes at the time. Zabelka said later that "the whole structure of secular, religious and military society told me clearly that it was all right to 'let the Japs have it.' God was on our side."

The two chaplains considered themselves responsible for the souls of the soldiers under their care. They both knew what the conventional incendiary and high explosive bombs were doing to Japan's essentially defenseless cities in the spring and summer of 1945 leading up to the "gimmick" bombs, and yet, Zabelka admitted that "I said nothing." He regretted that silence for the rest of his life.

Zabelka spent the last two decades of his life atoning for that silence, working tirelessly for world peace, denouncing militarism as being clearly anti-Christian. A contrite and sorrowful Zabelka was in Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1995, asking for forgiveness from the Japanese people for his role in what is now widely regarded as a crime against humanity and an international war crime.

Father Emmanuel Charles McCarthy, the foremost apostle of Christian nonviolence in America today, and the person most responsible for Zabelka's conversion to gospel nonviolence, has dedicated his life and ministry to raising the consciousness of the church to the truths of Jesus's nonviolent teachings. McCarthy says:

"Today, as for most of the last 1700 years, most Christians continue to justify as consistent with the spirit of Christ those energies, understandings and emotions which lead inevitably to August 9. Today most Christians still do not unequivocally teach what Jesus unequivocally taught on the subject of violence. Today most Christians still refuse to proclaim that violence is not the Christian way, that violence is not the Holy way, that violence is not the way of Jesus."

Box Cars, Bock's Cars and Ground Zeros

Every July 1, to call the Christian community to repent and return to the ethical truths of the original form of Christianity, (i.e., the nonviolent love of friends and enemies as the way of Jesus), Father McCarthy leads a 40- day

fast from solid foods, solemnly breaking it on August 9 at the site of the first atomic bomb detonation test site at Alamogordo, New Mexico. That secret test, on July 16, 1945, was blasphemously code-named "Trinity."

McCarthy suggests that all ethically-minded people, especially Christians who practice their faith as if the Sermon on the Mount mattered, ponder the un-Christ-like horrors suffered by the hundreds of millions of war dead over the last century, the hundreds of millions of spiritually dead and dying veterans of foreign wars and the crippled civilian survivors of war and gun violence.

And he advises considering also the secondarily traumatized families of those soldiers who went off to the killing fields thinking that they were only doing their patriotic duty to some kind of god (and some kind of country) when they were actually mostly cannon fodder doing the bidding of war-profiteering corporations and the wealthy elite.

Of course, it goes without saying that we need to mourn for, repent of and try to reverse our nation's militaristic nationalism and the ever-lasting U.S.-led wars that create more wealth for the weapons manufacturers and financiers and more suffering for their victims who are riding in figurative "box cars" heading toward torture chambers at detention camps like Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, CIA prisons around the world and maximum security prisons around the nation.

And, of course, we cannot ignore the substantial risk of spiritual death for the obedient active-duty soldiers who are aboard the "Bock's Cars" over Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria and who knows where else in the world upon which the American empire is rapidly encroaching.

And we need to apologize to and compensate for the many innocent, un-tried and un-convicted victims of extra-judicial killings who are at the various Ground Zeros of the CIA and Pentagon-launched killer drones.

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Rejecting War-Crime Rationales

Since the Fourth Century A.D., Christian churches have sanctified nationalism and wars rather than insist on the non-violent teachings of Jesus, leaving many misguided Christians to explain later why they became implicated in war crimes, a predicament that Gary G. Kohls says is repeating again in modern America.

By Gary G. Kohls

“What did you do in the war, Daddy?” was the title of a wonderful book written by Sabine Reichel, who was born in devastated post-war Hamburg in 1946 to Nazi-collaborator parents who were respected in their post war community but had never talked to her about what they had done during the war years.

The truth only came out during Reichel’s young adult years.

“What did you do in the war” was the dreaded question that multitudes of guilty World War II-era German parents and grandparents faced when their children and grandchildren belatedly realized that war crimes had been committed by their nation in that war and that the harsh facts which had been censored out of their high school history books.

The gaps in the history books made many German children curious about the details that had been left out and so many of them started asking unwelcome questions of those family members who had survived the war.

Some wondered about what their parents had done while non-Aryan minorities were being discriminated against. What had their parents done while the Nazi thugs were torturing and murdering the “enemies of the state” during Hitler’s “thousand-year Reich.”

Those questions usually elicited evasive half-truths from parents in their weak attempts to cover up the guilt and shame of either being active participants or simply guilty bystanders – rather than resisters – of what was obviously a monstrous evil.

In both World Wars I and II, German “patriots” (the vast majority of whom were regular Christian church-goers) enthusiastically marched off to what they thought were justified wars, wars fought defending against various outsider groups who were accused of endangering the “holy” homeland.

Conscription-age males eventually included child-soldiers and men up to the age of 60 because, eventually, most of the ideal-age young adult men had been used up. German men were told by their Catholic and Protestant bishops and pastors that it was their Christian duty to fight and kill for the Fuhrer. The women were told to support the troops and the war mission by having babies and otherwise sacrificing for the war effort.

One’s Duty

The “patriotic” duty for all “patriotic” Germans was to serve “Volk, Fuhrer und Vaterland” in aggressive war that was later defined at the Nuremberg trials as

crimes against humanity and international war crimes.

The soldier's sacred oath of allegiance to Hitler and his killing machine totally trumped the Golden Rule of the gospels and the Christic ethical principles of love of friend, neighbor and enemy, basic gospel truths that were never taught from German pulpits. That sad reality certainly seems to be true of American churches today and yesterday.

Most German Christians saw no contradiction between the demands of Jesus's gospel ethic of love, mercy and forgiveness and the ruthless and cruel "gods" of war and wealth. There wasn't even a hint of a gospel nonviolence movement among German Christians. Dietrich Bonhoeffer came along far too late.

German Christians couldn't have been expected to understand the practicality of the ethical teachings of Jesus's Sermon on the Mount. They didn't make the connections between the stories of the early Christian martyrs (who knew Jesus best) and their total refusal to engage in homicidal violence, even against their enemies.

It's likely that none of the religious books that they had studied in Sunday school or seminary had talked about the satanic nature of war. German Christians may have understood that the presence of Christian chaplains in the military was an endorsement of the organized mass slaughter of war and therefore as somehow being compatible with the teachings of Jesus.

Perhaps they were fooled by the fact that German soldiers in both World Wars went into battle with the words "Gott Mit Uns" (God With Us) inscribed on their belt buckles. Perhaps they were fooled by the well-oiled media machinery that consistently pumped out pro-war propaganda. Perhaps they weren't aware that the anti-war, anti-fascist and socialist printing presses had been smashed and silenced.

Given the glorious (or inglorious) history of Europe's church-endorsed Reformation, Counter-Reformation and Hundred-Year wars, Prussian militarism was regarded as somehow being normal, godly, perhaps even hereditary.

To illustrate how so many "Good Germans" were brain-washed into becoming accessories to murder, I include below an extended excerpt from a homily delivered by Father Emmanuel Charles McCarthy at Auschwitz, Poland, on the 50th anniversary of the August 9, 1942, gassing, murder and incineration of a Carmelite Catholic nun, Edith Stein, a brilliant Jewish feminist and scholar who had converted to Christianity prior to the institution of the "Final Solution."

She changed her name to Sister Maria Theresa of the Cross when she entered the carmel at Cologne during the early years of the war. The homily is titled

“Mission of Peace at Auschwitz”

“It is a truism of Christian existence that if the Gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed in all its fullness except as it relates to the great spiritual failures of one’s own time, the Gospel has not been proclaimed. Failure to speak and act in a Christ-like fashion in relation to the diabolical operations of one’s own age can even make Christianity an accomplice in evil.

“Silence (or its sophisticated equivalent, open-ended ambiguous moral statements capable of an indefinite number of interpretations) gives consent. The Christian Church knows this. Hence, at different periods over her 2,000-year history, she has taken a red pencil and underlined with maximal authority certain words of the Gospel which people inside and outside the church at a particular time were in dire need of facing and accepting.

“The cost for this underlining was often substantial. Yet, fidelity to Jesus’s Great Commission to the Church allowed for nothing less: ‘Go you, therefore, and baptize all nations in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you.’ (Matthew 28:19-20)

“The most obvious reality about Auschwitz is that Auschwitz is about homicide. Whatever else one wants to say about Edith Stein’s death, it is, like Jesus’s death, homicide. As the 20th Century winds down, 100 million corpses of people who have been killed at the hands of other human beings bear witness to nine decades of unmatched homicidal savagery. This death toll is more than all the centuries of recorded history combined and, as of today, we are still counting.

“If the moral moment has not now come for the Church to take out her red pencil and underline Jesus’s teachings on enmity and homicidal violence and to inform her own people that they must stop their participation in the state-sponsored tournaments of homicide called war, then it is hard to see what level of demonic behavior would have to be reached for the Church to remove her people from those spirits and apparatuses of human destruction which are so contrary to all that Jesus was and taught.

“There is no such thing as a Christian military solution to the evil of homicidal violence. A Christ-like war is a lie. It is obviously not a Christ-like solution, if, instead of my child or friend being destroyed, someone else’s child or friend is destroyed.

“National military solutions without exception are willing to throw someone else’s child or friend into the flames and therefore cannot be in line with the teaching of Jesus, who would throw no one into the flames. Yet, the historical record is beyond dispute.

“Since the time of Constantine (312 CE) to this time of global radiation, Christians have been killing each other, as well as non-Christians, and have been blessed for doing so by other Christians. The Christian allegiance to the spirit and behavioral demands of state endorsed homicide has been nothing short of idolatrous.

“Over and over again the Church – Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant – has permitted her sacramental, catechistical and educational systems to become part of the Pantheon of ‘myths men kill by.’

“The following excerpt from an address by Bishop Franz Josef Rarkowski, the Catholic Bishop for the German Military, who was directly responsible for the moral and spiritual guidance of German Catholics in World War II, is illustrative and utterly normal in Church history:

“‘Each of you knows what is at stake for our Volk in these stormy days, and, in whatever is asked of you, each sees before him the shining example of a true warrior, our Fuhrer and Supreme Commander, the first and most valiant soldier of the Greater German Reich, who is even now with you at the battlefield.

“‘We will never forget that first day of September (1939) when he issued his formal call to arms to the entire Volk. You, too, were somewhere out there ... Your ears and hearts were witness to that historic moment when the Fuhrer stepped before the whole Volk in his old military cloak of army gray. You heard his words and sensed in them your Supreme Commander’s love and concern. ... Thus, the example of the Fuhrer stands before you in brilliant glory.’

“This kind of anti-Gospel catechesis and rhetoric in support of homicide and enmity can be found in the mouths of most Christian pastors wherever on this globe the Church – Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant – has been established since the Fourth Century.

“Again, if the time is not here for the Church to pick up her red pencil and put an ‘X’ through all of this sham Christianity, while simultaneously underlining in red Jesus’s teachings that reject enmity and homicide, when will the time be here for her to sever her alliance in homicide with the state?

“The flames of Auschwitz in which Edith Stein was incinerated were the bitter fruit of an ecumenical Christian effort. At least 90 percent of the people responsible for the immediate operation of Auschwitz, and for the civilian bureaucratic support systems that was absolutely necessary for its existence, were baptized Christians.”

Pledging Allegiance

Whatever the process, Germans were well-prepared to obediently follow their Fuhrer; and just as all soldiers everywhere solemnly take their oaths, pledge their allegiance to and salute the flag, obey orders (even illegal ones) and promise to fulfill their "duty to God and Country," so did German soldiers pledge their allegiance to Hitler and the swastika and to do their duty to ensure homeland security.

Sadly but predictably, the military and religious leaders of all militarized nations throughout history do not exercise their duty to warn their prospective soldiers about the high likelihood of becoming victims of the usually permanent, brain-altering, soul-destroying, neurological disease known as "shell shock" (in WW I), "battle fatigue" and "combat stress" (in WW II and the Korean War) or, finally and more accurately, combat-induced posttraumatic stress disorder (in Vietnam and beyond).

And so most of us sheeple vote for our representatives without knowing a thing about their susceptibility to intimidation by the Pentagon, the CIA, the FBI, the NRA and the NSA or whether or not they will accept bribes (aka campaign contributions) from antidemocratic institutions such as right-wing think tanks and megacorporations (especially weapons manufacturers, Big Banks and Big Oil).

By our inability to directly question candidates for national office, we have already become dumbed-down enough to feel impotent and uncertain about the justifiability of our nation's current or past wars. We therefore have become, just like average Good Germans in the Hitler era, preemptively unified in our willingness to make murder for the state when the next false flag is waved and the next war gets started.

If we want to avoid having to squirm or lie when our angry, soon-to-be-impooverished, education-deprived, malnourished, jobless and debt-ridden children ask us questions about what we did during America's current wars of economic and military imperialism ("full spectrum domination"), and the on-rushing destruction and depletion of the planet's resources, we must at least refuse to be complacent about the slaughter of our fellow planetary inhabitants that is being perpetrated in our name.

Members of antiwar, anti-imperialist resistance groups that are supporting or participating in the nonviolent Occupy Wall Street movement won't have to be evasive when their children and grandchildren ask them "what did you do during the war?"

Instead, they will be able to proudly tell them about their nonviolent resistance efforts that might then give them hope or encourage them to follow in the footsteps of their altruistic mothers, fathers, grandmas and grandpas who

did what they could do to stop the wealth-extractors, the polluters and the war-mongers before they could start the next war or poison the next river.

Hopefully it is not already too late.

Dr. Gary G. Kohls is a founding member of The Community of the Third Way, a Duluth-area affiliate of Every Church A Peace Church (www.ecapc.org)

Are Drugs Behind Dementia Epidemic?

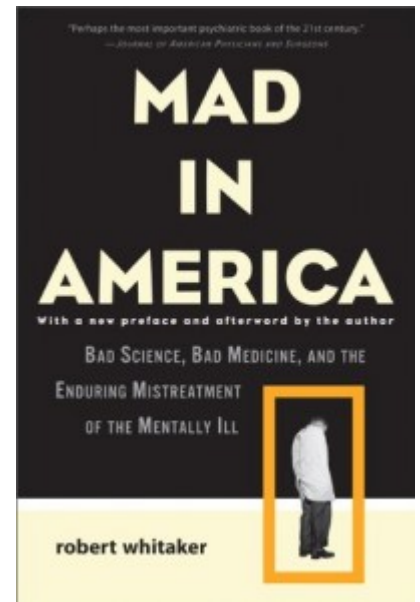
Millions of Americans, when facing depression or even just anxiety, turn to powerful psychiatric drugs marketed by pharmaceutical giants, whose ads gloss over the risks in fast-talking fine print. A counter-movement warning of the dangers from an over-prescribed society is emerging, as Gary G. Kohls describes.

By Gary G. Kohls, MD

Since the introduction of major tranquilizers like Thorazine and Haldol, “minor” tranquilizers like Miltown, Librium and Valium and the dozens of so-called “antidepressants” like Prozac, Zoloft and Paxil, tens of millions of unsuspecting Americans have become mired deeply, to the point of permanent disability, in the American mental “health” system.

Many of these innocents have actually been *made* “crazy” and often disabled by the use of – or the withdrawal from – these commonly prescribed, brain-altering and, for many, brain-damaging psychiatric drugs that have been, for many decades, cavalierly handed out like candy – often in untested and therefore

unapproved combinations of two or more.



Trusting and unaware patients have been treated with potentially dangerous drugs by equally unaware but well-intentioned physicians who have been likewise trusting of the slick and obscenely profitable psychopharmaceutical drug companies aka, BigPharma, not to mention the Food and Drug Administration, an agency that is all-too-often in bed with the drug industry that they are supposed to be monitoring and regulating. The foxes of BigPharma have a close ally inside the henhouse.

That is the conclusion of two books by a courageous investigative journalist and health science writer named Robert Whitaker. His first book, entitled *Mad in America: Bad Science, Bad Medicine and the Enduring Mistreatment of the Mentally Ill*, noted that there has been a 600 percent increase (since Thorazine was introduced in the U.S. in the mid-1950s) in the total and permanent disabilities of millions of psychiatric drug-takers.

This uniquely First World mental health epidemic has resulted in the taxpayer-supported, life-long disabilities of large numbers of psychiatric patients who are now unable to be happy, productive, taxpaying members of society.

Whitaker has done a powerful service to humanity, albeit an unwelcome one for various healthcare-related industries, by presenting previously hidden, but very convincing evidence from the scientific literature to support his thesis: that it is the drugs and not the so-called “mental illnesses” that are causing the epidemic of “mental illness” disability.

Many open-minded physicians and many aware psychiatric patients are now motivated to be wary of any and all synthetic chemicals that can cross the blood/brain barrier because all of them are capable of altering the brain in ways totally unknown to medical science, especially with long-term medication

use.

Astonishing Rise of Mental Illness

In Whitaker's second book, *Anatomy of an Epidemic: Magic Bullets, Psychiatric Drugs, and the Astonishing Rise of Mental Illness in America*, the author provides overwhelming proof regarding this sobering assertion.

He documents the history of the powerful forces behind the relatively new field of psychopharmacology and its major shapers, promoters and beneficiaries, namely BigPharma and those groups and individuals who benefit financially from the widespread and increasing use of psychiatric drugs, now even to toddlers, children and adolescents, despite no FDA-approval for marketing to the under-18 age group.

Psychiatric drugs are far more dangerous than the drug and psychiatric industries are willing to admit, especially for the developing brain. These drugs, it turns out, are fully capable of disabling – often permanently – bodies, brains and spirits. Whitaker presents evidence that is only rarely made available to mental health practitioners and the consumers of such synthetic drugs.

More evidence to support Whitaker's well-documented claims are laid out in two other important new books written by practicing psychiatrist and scholar Grace E. Jackson, MD. Jackson has done yeoman's work in researching and documenting, from the voluminous basic neuroscience literature (which is often ignored by mental health clinicians), the unintended and often disastrous consequences of the chronic ingestion of any of the major classes of psychiatric drugs.

Jackson's most powerful book, in my opinion, is her second one, *Drug-Induced Dementia: A Perfect Crime*, which proves that any of the five classes of psychotropic drugs that are commonly used to alter the brains of psychiatric patients (antidepressants, antipsychotics, psychostimulants, tranquilizers and anti-seizure/"mood-stabilizer" drugs) have shown microscopic, macroscopic, radiologic, biochemical, immunologic and clinical evidence of brain shrinkage and other signs of brain damage, especially when used long-term.

Long-term use can result in clinically diagnosable, probably irreversible dementia, premature death and a variety of other related brain disorders that can mimic mental illnesses "of unknown cause."

Dr. Jackson's first book, *Rethinking Psychiatric Drugs: A Guide for Informed Consent*, was an equally sobering warning about the many hidden dangers of psychiatric drugs, dangers that are commonly not mentioned to patients when they get their first prescriptions.

The sad truth is that the prescribing of potent and often addicting (dependency-inducing) psychiatric drugs has become the standard of care in American medicine since the introduction of the so-called anti-schizophrenic “miracle” drug Thorazine in the mid-1950s. (Thorazine was the offending drug that Jack Nicholson’s character Randall McMurphy and his fellow patients were coerced into taking – to keep them from revolting – at “medication time” in the Academy Award-winning movie “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.”)

Thorazine and all the other “me-too” early “antipsychotic” drugs are now universally known to have been an iatrogenic (doctor or other treatment-caused) disaster because of their serious long-term, initially unsuspected, brain-damaging effects that resulted in a number of permanent and incurable neurological disorders such as tardive dyskinesia, tardive dementia, Parkinson’s disease, etc.

Thorazine and all the other knock-off drugs (like Prolixin, Mellaril, Navane, etc.) are synthetic “tricyclic” chemical compounds similar in molecular structure to the tricyclic “antidepressants” like imipramine and the similarly toxic, obesity-inducing, diabetogenic, “atypical” anti-schizophrenic drugs like Clozaril, Zyprexa and Seroquel.

Thorazine, incidentally, was originally developed in Europe as an industrial dye. That doesn’t sound so good although it may not be so unusual in the closely related fields of psychopharmacology and the chemical industry.

For example, Depakote, a popular drug approved initially only as an anti-epilepsy drug is now being heavily promoted as a so-called “mood stabilizer.” Depakote, known to be a hepatotoxin and renal toxin (potentially poisonous to liver and kidney), was originally developed as an *industrial solvent* capable of dissolving fat – including, presumably, the fatty tissue in human livers and brains.

There are reports in the literature of patients who had never had a seizure in their lives but had been prescribed Depakote for other reasons, who suffered withdrawal seizures when discontinuing the drug!

Some sympathy and understanding needs to be generated for the various victims of BigPharma’s relentless drive to expand market share and “shareholder value” (share price, dividends and the next quarter’s financial report) by whatever means necessary.

Both the prescribers and the swallows of BigPharma’s drugs have been influenced by cunning marketing campaigns. Prescribers have been seduced by attractive opposite-sex drug company representatives and their “pens, pizzas and

post-it note” freebies in the office.

Patients have been brain-washed by the inane and unbelievable (if one has intact critical thinking skills) commercials on TV that quickly gloss over the lethal adverse effects in the fine print while urging the watcher to “ask your doctor” about getting a prescription for the latest unaffordable blockbuster drug.

Mental Illness Disability

For a quick overview of these issues, I recommend that everybody read a long essay written by Whitaker that persuasively identifies the source of America’s epidemic of mental illness disability (a phenomenon that doesn’t exist in Third World nations where costly psych drugs are not prescribed as cavalierly as in the developed First World).

Whitaker and Jackson (among a number of other courageous ground-breaking and whistle-blowing authors who have been essentially black-listed by the mainstream media and even in mainstream medical journals) have proven to most critically thinking scientists, alternative practitioners and assorted “psychiatric survivors” that it is indeed the drugs – and not the so-called “disorders” – that are causing our nation’s epidemic of mental illness disability.

(For Whitaker’s essay, plus other pertinent information about his books, [click here](#). An excellent long interview with Dr Joseph Mercola can be heard by [clicking here](#).)

After reading and studying all these inconvenient truths, mental health practitioners must consider the medicolegal implications for them, especially if the information is ignored by practitioners who are often tempted to dismiss out of hand new, clinically-important information that challenges or disproves their old belief systems.

Those who are hearing about new data for the first time need to pass the word on to others, especially their healthcare practitioners. This is important because the opinion leaders in the highly influential psychiatric and medical industries have often been bribed or marketed into submission, without considering all the facts that might some day reveal that they are guilty of malpractice.

It shouldn’t have to be pointed out that it is the solemn duty of ethical practitioners to fully examine – and then reveal to their patients – the potential negatives of prescription drugs.

Sadly, it must be admitted that most of the over-worked, double-booked caregivers in medical clinics (and I was once one of them, so I know whereof I speak) have not yet heard this sobering news: that most, if not all of the

brain-altering synthetic chemicals known as psychotropic drugs (which are treated as hazardous materials until they are packaged in swallowable or injectable forms!) have been hastily marketed as “safe and effective” – but not “proven” to be more than marginally-effective or safe in very short-term use.

The captains of the pharmaceutical industries know that most psychotropic drugs that they present for FDA-approval have only been tested in animal trials for days or weeks and only tested in clinical trials with real humans for only four to eight weeks. These captains of industry also know – and fervently hope – that patients will be taking their high-profit-margin drugs for years despite no long-term trials proving safety and efficacy before the drug got its FDA approval for marketing.

These corporate heads (who usually are among the 1 percent) have succeeded in convincing almost everybody that treatment for “mental illness” means drugs rather than any consideration of safer, often curative, non-drug alternatives. They also know that their brain-altering drugs can be dependency-inducing (aka addicting, causing withdrawal symptoms when stopped), neurotoxic and increasingly ineffective (a la “Prozac Poop-out”) as time goes by.

The truth is that the most people who have been diagnosed as “mentally ill for life” (and therefore told that they need to consume drugs for the rest of their lives) are often simply people who have been unfortunate enough to have found themselves, through no fault of their own, in temporary or long-term states of crisis or “overwhelmed.”

Such crises can be due to any number of preventable and imminently curable (i.e., with treatment utilizing counseling, good nutrition but no need for long-term drug use) bad luck situations.

These situations can result from sexual, physical, psychological or spiritual abuse. Or the loss of job, loss of home, loss of relationship, poverty, violence, torture, homelessness, racial discrimination, joblessness/underemployment, brain malnutrition, drug addictions and/or withdrawal, brain damage from traumatic brain injury (including electroshock “therapy”). Or to exposure to neurotoxic chemicals in their food, air, water or prescription bottles.

None of the above, it should be pointed out, are “mental illnesses of unknown etiology.” They aren’t even mental illnesses.

‘Just Say No to Drugs’

Those labeled as “mentally ill” are usually just like most of the so-called “normals” who have not yet decompensated because of some yet-to-happen, crisis-

inducing, overwhelming (however temporary) life situation.

And thus we have somehow not yet been given a billable code number (accompanied by the seemingly obligatory – and usually unaffordable – drug prescription or two) that signifies that we are now among the burgeoning population of the “chronically mentally ill.”

If we are lucky enough to have no DSM label, we will most likely have been lucky enough to remain off prescription drugs; however, with a label and now within “the system,” it is very difficult to “just say no to drugs.”

The victims of hopelessness-generating random situations like bad luck, bad circumstances, bad company, bad choices, bad government and living in a ruthless wealth-extracting capitalist economic system where the competitive society unjustly rewards “winners” who rise to the top at the expense of the “losers” in the lower 99 percent.

America tolerates, indeed celebrates, punitive and thus fear-inducing social systems resembling in many ways the infamous police state realities of 20th century European totalitarianisms, where people who were different or dissident were thought to be abnormal.

Such abnormal ones were often so intolerable to the ruling elites that they were “disappeared” into insane asylums, jails or concentration camps without just cause or competent legal defense. And many of them were (and still are) drugged against their wills with disabling psychoactive chemicals, living out their miserable, numbed lives in the back wards of institutions.

The truth is that most, if not all of BigPharma’s psychotropic drugs are lethal at some dosage level (the LD50, the lethal dose that kills 50 percent of lab animals, is calculated before testing is done on humans), and therefore the drugs need to be regarded as hazardous.

The chronic use of these drugs must be considered to be among the major causes, not just of disability and dementia, but of various less well-defined and often overlapping disorders such as cognitive disorders, brain atrophy, loss of creativity, loss of spirituality, loss of empathy, loss of energy, loss of strength, loss of memory, loss of intelligence, fatigue and tiredness, aggression, personality disorders and a multitude of adverse metabolic effects that can sicken the body, brain and soul by causing insomnia, somnolence, mania, panic disorders, worsening depression, increased anxiety, delusions, psychoses, paranoia, etc.

So before filling the prescription, it is advisable to *read* the product insert labeling under WARNINGS, PRECAUTIONS, ADVERSE EFFECTS, CONTRAINDICATIONS,

TOXICOLOGY, OVERDOSAGE and the ever-present BLACK BOX WARNINGS ABOUT SUICIDALITY.

Long-term, high dosage or combination psychotropic drug usage could be regarded as a chemically traumatic brain injury (cTBI) or, as “antipsychotic” drugs were known in the 1950s and 1960s, a “chemical lobotomy.”

TBI or chemical lobotomy can be a useful way to conceptualize this serious issue of drug-induced toxicity, because such neurologically brain-altered patients can be indistinguishable from those who have suffered physically traumatic brain injuries or been subjected to ice-pick lobotomies which were popular before psych drugs came on the market in the 1950s and before the huge epidemic of mental illness that America is experiencing.

America’s health epidemic in mental illness is grossly misunderstood. And the epidemic is worsening, not because of a supposed disease progression, but because of the chronic use of neurotoxic, non-curative drugs that are, in America, erroneously regarded as first-line “therapy.”

(For more information, you can check: www.madinamerica.com; www.cchr.org; www.mindfreedom.org; www.breggin.com; www.icspponline.org; www.drugawareness.org; www.psychrights.org; www.benzo.org.uk; www.quitpaxil.org; www.wildscolts.com; www.endofshock.com; www.mercola.com; www.iHealthTube.com and follow the links.)

Dr. Gary G. Kohls is a member of MindFreedom International and the International Center for the Study of Psychiatry and Psychology. He is the editor of the occasional Preventive Psychiatry E-Newsletter. Dr. Kohls warns against the abrupt discontinuation of any psychiatric drug because of the common, often serious withdrawal symptoms that can occur with the chronic use of any dependency-inducing psychoactive drug, whether illicit or legal. Patients should consult their physicians. (This article was previously posted at: <http://rense.com/general91/edi.htm>)

In Case You Missed...

Some of our special stories in January, focusing on Election 2012, a possible new war with Iran, the economic degradation of America’s middle class, missteps on climate change and more.

"Cain Kills Abel: the First Class War" by Rev. Howard Bess, tracing the history of class violence to Biblical tales. (Jan. 1, 2012)

"Iran/Iraq 'Defectors' and Disinformation" by Robert Parry, suggesting caution when hearing tales about an enemy. (Jan. 2, 2012)

"Triangulations of Christopher Hitchens" by Sam Husseini, exposing the dark side of the late and much acclaimed writer. (Jan. 2, 2012)

"Why Mr. Hardball Found JFK Elusive" by James DiEugenio, critiquing Chris Matthews's shallow biography of John Kennedy. (Jan. 3, 2012)

"A Betrayal of the Founders" by Ray McGovern, noting how President Obama ducked a fight over civil liberties. (Jan. 4, 2012)

"Fleeing the Angry Whites" by Robert Parry, describing how Republicans are again playing the race card to manipulate prejudiced whites. (Jan. 8, 2012)

"NYT 'Clarified' Santorum's Black Quote" by Robert Parry, recalling the contrast of how a Times reporter handled quotes by Al Gore and Rick Santorum. (Jan. 10, 2012)

"Herding Americans to War with Iran" by Robert Parry, explaining how the war propaganda is working again. (Jan. 12, 2012)

"Ron Paul's False Founding Narrative" by Robert Parry, challenging the libertarian view of America's founding. (Jan. 13, 2012)

"Turning America Into Pottersville" by Robert Parry, projecting how Right's policies would work out for the average person. (Jan. 14, 2012)

"Will Obama Resist Push for Iran War" by Marjorie Cohn, questioning the President's determination to stand up to Israeli demands. (Jan. 18, 2012)

"Web Sites Protest Anti-Piracy Bills" by Lisa Pease, reporting on an unprecedented Web reaction to restrictive proposals. (Jan. 18, 2012)

"How Not to Celebrate Liberty" by William Loren Katz, remarking on the irony of honoring principles of freedom with acts of repression. (Jan. 19, 2012)

"Israel Tamps Down Iran War Threats" by Ray McGovern, observing changes in Israeli rhetoric. (Jan. 19, 2012)

"Getting Rid of 'Anti-Israel' Presidents" by Robert Parry, recalling the trouble U.S. presidents can encounter when they cross Israel. (Jan. 21, 2012)

"Reagan's Hand in Guatemala Genocide" by Robert Parry, linking the late

president to a Guatemalan dictator facing human rights charges. (Jan. 23, 2012)

[“The Fiscally Reckless Mitch Daniels”](#) by Robert Parry, exposing the real history of a supposed GOP deficit hawk. (Jan. 24, 2012)

[“US/Israel: Iran NOT Building Nukes”](#) by Ray McGovern, revealing that U.S. and Israeli intelligence agree that Iran has not decided to build a bomb. (Jan. 24, 2012)

[“What Kind of Christianity Is This?”](#) by Gary G. Kohls, questioning the bloody record of official Christendom in contrast to Jesus’s teaching. (Jan. 25, 2012)

[“Selling the Supply-Side Myth”](#) by Robert Parry, exploring how Ronald Reagan’s “supply-side” economics hurt the American middle class. (Jan. 27, 2012)

[“The Founders’ True Foresight”](#) by Robert Parry, noting how the Constitution gave America a unity that Europe has lacked. (Jan. 28, 2012)

[“Reagan’s Road to Climate Perdition”](#) by Sam Parry, tracing America’s lost way on alternative energy to Ronald Reagan’s mistakes. (Jan. 29, 2012)

[“The Ugly Words of Newt Gingrich”](#) by Robert Parry, reflecting on how Newt Gingrich devised nasty language to poison the U.S. political process. (Jan. 30, 2012)

[“No Justice for Haditha Massacre”](#) by Marjorie Cohn, reporting on the aftermath of military trials over an infamous Iraq slaughter. (Jan. 30, 2012)

[“Murdoch’s WSJ Misleads on Climate”](#) by Sam Parry, looking at the Wall Street Journal’s distortions on global warming. (Jan. 31, 2012)

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What Kind of Christianity Is This?

Though founded by a pacifist, Christianity has justified some of the most brutal slaughters in human history, from the wars of the late Roman Empire to the

Crusades to the Inquisition to world wars to genocides against “heathens,” Muslims and Jews. Yet, Gary G. Kohls says the essence of Christianity can still be reclaimed.

By Gary G. Kohls

From time to time, I read about condemnations of religion coming from non-religious groups, especially concerning the all-too-common violence perpetrated in the name of religious gods. Indeed there is plenty to condemn.

Altogether too many religions sects of both major and minor religions, despite verbally professing a desire for peace and justice in the world, are actually pro-war, pro-homicide and pro-violence in practice (or they may be silent on the subject, which is, according to moral theology, the same as being pro-violence).

Obvious examples include those portions of the three major war-justifying religions of the world: fundamentalist Islam, fundamentalist Judaism and fundamentalist Christianity.

I use the term fundamentalist in the sense that the religious person, who ascribes to a fundamentalist point of view, believes, among other dogmatic belief, that their scriptures are inerrant and thus they can find passages in their holy books that justify homicidal violence against their perceived or fingered enemies, while simultaneously ignoring the numerous contradictory passages that forbid violence and homicide and instead prescribe love, hospitality, mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Behind the scenes, of course, there are hidden elites – amoral, politically and financially motivated operatives who are embedded in these religious organizations – who, through the strength of their political power, can easily manipulate the followers into clamoring for war, not against their enemies, but rather against the enemies of the ruling elites: the politicians, the financiers and the other exploiters of natural resources.

And so nonviolent portions of the various religions and they are there, albeit often hidden and censored can be erroneously painted with the same brush that justifiably condemns the hypocrisy and the violence.

It is certainly true that the Catholic Church endorsed and/or orchestrated the genocide of the Crusades, the Inquisition and many wars of colonization and exploitation – with the origins of these atrocities in fundamentalist interpretations of “holy” scripture.

But I do have to take exception to the blanket condemnation of the entirety of

the religion by pointing out one reality – that the original form of Christianity, the church of the first generation after Jesus and even most of the first three centuries was a religion of pacifists, oppressed women, orphans, those forced into prostitution, despised people of all stripes and others of those called “the least.”

Though this history has long since been forgotten or ignored, the earliest followers of Jesus rejected violence, tried to return good for evil, fed the hungry, did acts of mercy and unconditional love and tried to make friends out of their enemies (by caring for them, feeding them, praying for them and certainly refusing to kill them or pay for somebody else to kill them).

Practicality of Nonviolence

It was a hugely successful ethical stance to take. It could be described as an act of divine genius. And it made tremendous practical sense. One bit of evidence of the practicality of gospel nonviolence is the fact that in the first couple of centuries, no early Christian male ever acquired combat-induced PTSD or the soul-destruction that always accompanies that reality.

And no early Christian ever felt depressed, ashamed, guilty or suicidal about killing, plundering or raping innocent unarmed women and children in wartime. The earliest Christians took seriously Jesus’s clear command to love and befriend their enemies, and despite brutal Roman persecutions the religion survived; indeed, it thrived.

In fact, by 300 CE, it had grown into one of the largest religions in the empire, at which point the emperor Constantine (who was a worshipper of the Sun god until his deathbed baptism into the “faith”) co-opted the church by stopping the persecutions and granting it power, property and prestige, thus seducing it into becoming the obedient and increasingly dependent state church whose master was the brutal, often satanic Roman Empire and its army generals.

Eventually and logically church leaders who were now dependent on the largesse and protection of the empire felt obliged to support it and its troops, pay homage to the emperor and send its young Christian men to violently defend the empire’s borders against the fingered enemy. Or homicidally enlarge the empire if it was profitable for Rome or the Papal State to do so.

Just War Theory

St. Augustine wrote the first Christian Just War Theory (CJWT) in the late Fourth Century, making legitimate, in certain rare circumstances, killing by Christians in wartime, which had been long forbidden to the followers of Jesus.

Soon thereafter, Christianity became a religion of justified violence, contrary to the teachings and modeling of Jesus, and it remains that way until this very hour. However, it is generally agreed among Just War scholars that no war in the past 1,700 years has been conducted according to the principles of the Christian Just War Theory; that if the actual principles were applied to an impending war, they would lead Christians back to its original pacifist stance. And so the principles of the CJWT are not taught to the vast majority of Christians.

So, the blanket condemnation of homicidal religions, especially Christianity, is justified up to the point of acknowledging that the bulk of the Christian church, over the past 17 centuries, has ignored or become apathetic to – the nonviolent teachings of Jesus (forgiveness 70 X 7, unending mercy, ministering to “the least of these” and the unconditional love of friend and enemy).

Among the realities that keep the churches silent, of course, are the fear of losing the largesse of state-granted tax-exempt status and the threat that their pro-war, dues-paying members might object or leave if church leaders were to speak out prophetically about the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount and the incompatibility of nationalistic militarism with the life and teachings of Jesus.

But the Christianity of the first few centuries, when Christians refused to take up the sword, should not be condemned. Rather, critics of Christianity should start challenging the churches to go back to their roots where evil was not allowed to run rampant, but rather was aggressively and courageously resisted using the nonviolent methods of Jesus and his inspired disciples like Tolstoy, Gandhi, Dorothy Day, A. J. Muste, Martin Luther King, the Berrigan brothers, John Dear, Kathy Kelly and a multitude of other courageous prophetic voices.

The major motivation for the legendary civil disobedience of those modern-day prophets was their commitment to Jesus and the way he lived his life as pacifist (not passive) active resistor to evil.

The followers of that very real Jesus should be courageously “going to the streets” and saying “NO” wherever and whenever fear and hatred raise their ugly heads and try to provoke violence – no matter if it is coming from the US Congress or the Parliament in London, the Oval Office or # 10 Downing Street, in the Knesset or in the headquarters of Hamas, whether in Tehran or in Baghdad or in the Vatican or in Colorado Springs or in the bowels of the 700 Club – or from within the local parish.

Jesus, a Nonviolent Leftist

Jesus of the Gospels was an outspoken, nonviolent leftist who tried to reform

his authoritarian conservative, dogmatic church but also refused to shut up with his call for justice for the down-trodden – even when his superiors threatened him with serious consequences if he didn't.

The economic model of Jesus's early church was socialist, where the resources of the group were shared with the widow and orphans and others who didn't have enough. He would have stood, like the prophet he was, in solidarity with pacifists, socialists, antiwar activists and feminists and surely would have marched in nonviolent antiwar rallies.

Jesus was definitely NOT a punitive, pro-death penalty, pro-militarism conservative. His power came not from the sword but from the power of love.

Jesus would surely have condemned his church's complicity in the ethnic cleansing of Native Americans, the enslavement of black Africans and the segregationist, apartheid policies that were designed by various ruling elites to destroy ethnic or religious minorities.

And if the leadership of his church had been found guilty of or just complicit with such acts, especially genocide, Jesus would surely have insisted on the formation of an independent truth and reconciliation commission to respectfully hear the testimony of the victims, the survivors and the families of the survivors and allow those victims to face their victimizers. And then Jesus would have insisted upon his church repenting of the sins, whether committed by them or their forefathers.

The power that Jesus utilized was epitomized by the willingness to do the right thing in the crisis situations even if it involved risks to life or liberty. Fear had no power over him or the martyrs of the early church. His power came out of the holy spirit of love, goodness, mercy and forgiveness and his certainty that, by refusing to do acts of violence, he was doing the will of God.

The practicality of that radical stance resulted in the healing power that Jesus' disciples and apostles exhibited when they started implementing what Jesus had taught and modeled for them.

War and violence emanates from an entirely different spirit than the spirit shown by the early church. That spirit is the spirit of the unholy, the spirit of the satanic, the spirit of Cain. The willingness to kill was the spirit that was strongly present in such historic figures as Hitler, Goebbels, Himmler, Eichmann, Stalin, Mussolini (all baptized into pro-war, Constantinian Christian churches).

That evil spirit was also present in many saber-rattling militarists throughout

history – the most ruthless presidents, Secretaries of Defense, generals, dictators, legislators, gun-running businessmen and trained assassins that have ever lived – from the ancient low-tech, PTSD-afflicted Achilles, who killed up close and personal, looking into the eyes of his victims, to the ultra-modern, high-tech Air Force, Navy, Army and Marines that orchestrate, usually from safe distances, such atrocities as were perpetrated by Christian soldiers against innocent unarmed civilians at Nagasaki, Dresden, My Lai, Baghdad and Fallujah, to name just a few.

A Challenge to the Church

It seems to me that the Christian church must start teaching what Jesus taught about violence that it is forbidden for those who wish to follow him or our so-called “Christian” nation won’t be able to stop the deadly suicidal/homicidal cycle of war that has been bankrupting America, both financially and morally, for decades.

Jesus was absolutely right about the satanic nature of killing. The Golden Rule and his warning about the consequences of living by the sword speaks profound truth. According to just those two teachings, we can say that theologically and spiritually, the high-profile pro-war “Christians” that dominate the news are dead wrong.

That brand of Christianity definitely deserves condemnation. What has been criticized by Christianity’s detractors as the norm for Christianity is not the Sermon-on-the-Mount Christianity of Jesus but rather the aberrant “Constantinian Christianity,” a religion that espouses an anti-Christic, punitive theology that justifies killing fellow children of God in the name of the one who forbade it 2,000 years ago.

Church leaders need to repent of their support for (or their silence about) their nation’s state-sponsored terrorism and start acting ethically, as if the Sermon on the Mount mattered.

The Christian church in America MUST take the lead in this or it is doomed – as doomed as was Germany’s dominant Constantinian Christianity of the first half of the 20th century, whose pro-military, nationalist, racist, xenophobic, domination theology permitted torture, genocide and two brutal world wars that ultimately resulted in the suicide of German Christianity, not to mention the complete destruction of the nation by its provoked enemies.

One wonders what would have happened if every German and Russian and American church had been a real peace church, as the founder envisioned? The real question is, will we learn the lessons of history, or is it already too late?

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In Case You Missed...

Some of our special stories in December reflected on the end of a long war in Iraq and the potential for a new one in Iran; reported on developments in the Republican presidential race; warned of new encroachments on civil liberties; and noted the truth-telling courage of Bradley Manning; and more.

[“The Lost Opportunity of Iran-Contra”](#) by Robert Parry, describing how history turned when the Iran-Contra scandal was covered up. (Dec. 1, 2011)

[“Three Pillars of a Revived Republic”](#) by Robert Parry, suggesting what’s needed for American democracy to rebound. (Dec. 2, 2011)

[“Are Americans in Line for Gitmo”](#) by Ray McGovern, warning about dangerous language in a military spending bill. (Dec. 3, 2011)

[“Bringing the War on Terror Home”](#) by Coleen Rowley, exploring new congressional encroachments on civil liberties. (Dec. 4, 2011)

[“Cleansing Wall Street of Blame”](#) by Phil Rockstroh, noting how big media has shifted the narrative of a financial collapse. (Dec. 7, 2011)

[“Is Gingrich Fit to Be President?”](#) by Robert Parry, assessing the risk of a divisive megalomaniac reaching for the White House. (Dec. 8, 2011)

[“The Warning in Gary Webb’s Death”](#) by Robert Parry, recounting the tragic destruction of a brave journalist. (Dec. 9, 2011)

[“The Danger of Politicizing Terror”](#) by Coleen Rowley, finding lessons in how the 9/11 failures tied into politics. (Dec. 13, 2011)

[“Liberating America’s Worldview”](#) by Phil Rockstroh, noting how many Americans stubbornly oppose their own interests. (Dec. 15, 2011)

[“Will Iraq Debacle Prevent Iran War?”](#) by Robert Parry, wondering whether painful lessons will stick. (Dec. 15, 2011)

[“The Christmas Truce of 1914”](#) by Gary G. Kohls, reflecting on an inspirational moment in the trenches of World War I. (Dec. 16, 2011)

“Occupying Jesus and His Church” by Rev. Howard Bess, pointing out the deep contradictions between right-wing ideology and the teachings of Jesus. (Dec. 18, 2011)

“Is Iraq War End a New Day?” by Robert Parry, reflecting on the bitter experience of George W. Bush’s war of choice. (Dec. 19, 2011)

“Pvt. Manning and Imperative of Truth” by Ray McGovern, discerning why Bradley Manning has served his country bravely. (Dec. 21, 2011)

“The Bush/Obama War Against Truth” by Melvin A. Goodman, tracing the cruel treatment of Pvt. Manning back to hostility toward public awareness. (Dec. 21, 2011)

“Republican Tradition of Hostage Taking” by Robert Parry, showing how the GOP has often got its way. (Dec. 23, 2011)

“America’s Debt to Bradley Manning” by Robert Parry, describing the value of the ground truth found in the WikiLeaks documents. (Dec. 24, 2011)

“Slip-Sliding to War with Iran” by Robert Parry, warning that the momentum toward war with Iran may prove unstoppable. (Dec. 29, 2011)

“Urging Obama to Stop Rush to Iran War” by Ray McGovern and Elizabeth Murray, citing reasons to show caution. (Dec. 30, 2011)

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