Editorials from MFSO members:
By Al Glatkowski

We won’t go back to normal, because normal was the problem.
Hi, Al Glatkowski here, VVAW-OSS/VFP/MFSO, back home and checking in from my town in North Carolina. We are all hoping that each of our families in MFSO are safe, well, and practicing "Social Distancing." Having recently returned from Belize, CA (when I left, the only country to not have any Covid-19 cases), I was fortunate to drive back through both Belize and Mexico with no challenges and into a new reality here stateside. I followed the news while traveling but still actually entered a new world ~ so to speak ~ upon my return home and quarantine for just a bit over two weeks. With time on our hands, Cindy and I began to weed the gardens, both flowers and veggies. Cindy jokingly referred to our organic "Victory Garden" as a way to supplement our fare. A good thing considering the recent reports of lack of workers to harvest farm produce. I have always been proud to use the words"Victory Garden," as it has been a staple of my family even before my birth.  Link

I co-Admin several FaceBook pages and quickly tried to catch up on a lot of what I missed out on. What struck me hard in the face was the word "WAR" and how easily it was being bantered about and now ceaselessly used to describe the actions and preventative measures to deal with a Pandemic. Interestingly the word Pandemic comes from the Greek ~ Pan "all, and Demos. "people or population," or all people. The word "War" to describe this "Pandemic" is a good metaphor, particularly for a national leader who has no understanding of war outside of his narcissistic need to overwhelm his opponents, gaslight the gullible, and prove his value to the top 1%. Let's see, how many "Wars" do we have here in the US? War on Poverty (a joke), War on Drugs (questionable at best), and others I am certain. The con-man is the "War President" now, eagerly and clearly getting and keeping us all toeing the line. Oh, and how easily many of us have fallen for this new "War."

I made the effort to keep in communication with other activists while abroad and during my rests stops. I traveled with a 12-volt cooler, my own water, a cardboard box of non-perishable food, hand sanitizer wipes, toilet paper and bottled coffee, most all purchased in Belize before I began my 8 day journey, and slept in my pickup as much as possible. All was worth its weight in gold I later found out. Belize closed its last border the day I left, and the International Airport the next. It was an interesting journey. While little Belize was awaiting the arrival of Cuban assistance, doctors and nurses, had already been testing people in different parts of the country, (yes they have it there and have already lost several citizens), but life went on along the small back roads, and the occasional toll highways, I traveled back to the states through Mexico. Crossing the US border was never so easy. On my road trip back I could see each state's visible reaction to the virus: one could see from the Interstate that Texas had closed their malls by the time I got there (and Texans love their malls!); Louisiana wasn't yet so tight; Mississippi was a blur other than sleeping for a hour or two at rest stops; Alabama? Another blur; the governor of Georgia was still defiant; South Carolina was closed; and so was North Carolina. I am glad I reached out to folks along the drive.

If we're not doing something now, then we are doing something wrong. After I got home, I quickly discovered that people are finding ways to keep up with their activism. I immediately signed up for different webinars being offered by groups I follow on FaceBook and through other means of communication. I have reached out to be on zoom calls, Jitsi calls, etc. The first thing I realized is that we must step up and figure out alternative ways of doing active resistance against the wars. We can no longer do things in the same way we did before. It

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is complicated, but we are now required to think outside of our box, outside of our normal parameters. I have learned of one group that organized a rolling caravan for immigration rights of the detainees, a clever way to stay safe and still get their message out. Other actions I have learned of included issue-related online cocktail hour discussions; warrior writers projects online groups in NJ with Paula and Jan; post card campaigns; and yes, some of our veteran brothers and sisters are out on the frontlines bringing food and medical care to those in need, particularly the homeless, hungry and elderly. Other groups, just like the MFSO board, are meeting online to reflect, share and brainstorm ideas on how to have the greatest impact during this shutdown.

While we continue to get disappointing news that so many long planned events by our allies have or are being cancelled, (VFP annual convention in Albuquerque, Poor People's Campaign in DC, 50th anniversary of Kent State), what can we do? SHARE, SHARE,SHARE! Share everything you think someone needs to know about online! HASHTAG (#EndTheWarsNow!) your anti-war postings or any post for that matter. Seriously reflect on your own actions and begin to grow outside of the box! If you share only with like-minded people maybe now is the time to expand the horizon. I don't expect many will pick fruit and vegetables for the wages that have been normally paid to non-union farmworkers: I now call my garden the "Victory Garden over Capitalism." Take a risk. Learn how to Zoom or Jitsi or GoTo Meeting. Many offer free access for limited size meetings. Inspire others and then do it again. Eight or nine days ago I made the decision to daily call 5 friends, just to check in with them, discuss what's happening in their lives and areas and to share things from my side of the country, but I did so all along my drive as well. It's a Pandemic, a public health Pandemic, I don't need the con-man's "War."

Al Glatkowski, and his wife Cindy live in a coastal community in N. Carolina. They have had two sons in the military, one a Gulf War Navy Veteran and the other an active duty Army officer an former Blackhawk Army pilot that was deployed to Afghanistan twice. Al was a Merchant Marine in Vietnam in 1967, and continues to be an antiwar activist.

In the News:

**Military fights virus on two fronts** As the Pentagon deploys hospital ships, it shifts plans after dozens of sailors are infected. It already has canceled or reduced several large-scale training exercises, halted the movement of troops overseas and domestically, confined the aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt to port in Guam after an outbreak aboard the warship, and shuttered many of its recruiting offices around the country. [Link to story](#)

**U.S. threatens to cut aid as Afghan talks teeter** Kabul government risks losing $2 billion unless it negotiates with the Taliban. [Link to story](#)

**US-Led Forces Pull Out of 3rd Iraqi Base this Month** The K1 Air Base is the third site coalition forces have left this month, in line with U.S. plans to consolidate its troops in two locations in Iraq. [Link to story](#)

**Swing state Republicans back U.S. troop pullout from Middle East** A new poll shows that supporters of President Trump in the key battleground states of Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin strongly support bringing U.S. troops home from the Middle East. The Tarrance Group poll found a majority and often supermajority support for pulling troops out of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, as well as the recent Afghan peace deal and pursuing diplomacy instead of military conflict with Iran. [Link to story](https://bringourtroopshome.us/polls)

**Taliban, US commander discuss violence reduction in Afghanistan** The commander of US forces in Afghanistan has met Taliban leadership in Doha to discuss the need to reduce violence in the war-torn country, which threatens to derail a fragile peace process, [Link to story](#)
Military Families Speak Out
April 2020

**Probably the closest the US Navy has come to a mutiny** Captain Crozier was fired after a leak of a letter he had emailed to Navy leaders detailing the service’s failures in dealing with a coronavirus outbreak on the U.S.S. Theodore Roosevelt. [Link to story](#)

**Note:** The opinions reflected above and in future editorials are not a reflection of any official stance approved by the MFSO board, which meets monthly and posts official positions decided by the board on our website. Your responses and opinions are welcome. If you would like to send your own editorial on any MFSO related issue, please send to mfsooc@earthlink.net

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