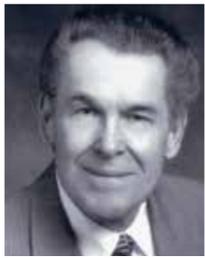


Yes, You Can Help Prevent the Next War

by Barry Reece



Over the years the United States has played an increasingly aggressive, militarized role in the world. An entire generation of Americans has grown up thinking this behavior is normal. Now is the time to join one or more peace activist groups that are working to avoid another war. Membership in the following organizations is not limited to military veterans.

Vietnam Veterans Against the War is an American non-profit organization founded in 1967 to oppose the U.S. policy and participation in the Vietnam war. Over the years VVAW has carried out the struggle for peace, justice, and the rights of all veterans. It has

provided us with a comprehensive account of the war crimes committed by U.S. forces in Vietnam and the efforts made by the highest levels of the military to cover them up. Members receive *The Veteran*, a newspaper that includes articles written by members, poems, and book reviews. <https://www.vvaw.org>

Veterans For Peace is an international organization made up of military veterans from all branches of service. VFP is dedicated to building a culture of peace, exposing the true causes and costs of war, and healing the wounds of war. Members receive *Peace in Our Times*, a quarterly newspaper featuring articles, book reviews, poems, and images. There are active VFP chapters in over 100 U.S. cities. Eisenhower Chapter 157 is comprised of members from the Triangle. <https://www.veteransforpeace.org>

Peace Action is the nation's largest grassroots peace network with chapters in states across the country. For over 60 years Peace Action has worked to create an environment where all are free from violence and war. Peace Action is organized to place pressure on Congress and the administration through write-in campaigns, internet actions, grassroots lobbying and direct action. It has achieved victories in successful campaigns to ban landmines, end nuclear weapons testing, and stop arms transfer to nations that abuse human rights. <https://www.peaceaction.org>

Anyone who is searching for a way to become a peace activist is welcome to join one or all of the above groups. Yes, you can help prevent another U.S. war.

Dr. Barry L. Reece is a U.S. Army veteran and member of these three organizations.

Open Letter from the Senior Clergy of our National Cathedral

GOOD DAY TO ALL AMERICANS,

As human beings we all have notions about what America is, and could be. As pragmatic American Citizens we understand that part of what America has been, is, and will be into the future includes the presence of hate, racism, and fear-mongering. But regardless of what political beliefs, structures, or programs individual citizens support, surely an overwhelming percentage of us are better than to dream of encouraging hate, racism, and fear-mongering as core values of our nation. It is vitally important that we citizens reject the behavior of our elected officials who continue to spew hate, racism, and fear-mongering as a principle of their leadership. Even more dangerous to the future viability of our incredible representative democracy are those elected officials who encourage, defend, or stay silent to the presence of this type of destructive political leadership.

With these thoughts in mind, it is important that all of us read, reflect on, and consider our personal, individual, and citizen's responsibilities to the July 30, 2019, Open Letter from the Senior Clergy of our National Cathedral which was published on the Cathedral's website. Full content is at this URL: <https://cathedral.org/have-we-no-decency-a-response-to-president-trump.html>

Bruce Eugene Davis, Pittsboro NC

The escalation of racialized rhetoric from the President of the United States has evoked responses from all sides of the political spectrum. On one side, African American leaders have led the way in rightfully expressing outrage. On the other, those aligned with the President seek to downplay the racial overtones of his attacks, or remain silent.

As faith leaders who serve at Washington National Cathedral – the sacred space where America gathers at moments of national significance – we feel compelled

to ask: After two years of President Trump's words and actions, when will Americans have enough?

As Americans, we have had such moments before, and as a people we have acted. Events of the last week call to mind a similarly dark period in our history:

"Until this moment, Senator, I think I never really gauged your cruelty or your recklessness. ... You have done enough. Have you no sense of decency?"

That was U.S. Army attorney Joseph Welch on June 9, 1954, when he confronted Senator Joseph McCarthy before a live television audience, effectively ending McCarthy's notorious hold on the nation. Until then, under the guise of ridding the country of Communist infiltration, McCarthy had free rein to say and do whatever he wished. With unbridled speech, he stoked the fears of an anxious nation with lies; destroyed the careers of countless Americans; and bullied into submissive silence anyone who dared criticize him.

In retrospect, it's clear that Welch's question was directed less toward McCarthy and more to the nation as a whole. Had Americans had enough? Where was our sense of decency?

We have come to accept a level of insult and abuse in political discourse that violates each person's sacred identity as a child of God. We have come to accept as normal a steady stream of language and accusations coming from the highest office in the land that plays to racist elements in society.

This week, President Trump crossed another threshold. Not only did he insult a leader in the fight for racial justice and equality for all persons; not only did he savage the nations from which immigrants to this country have come; but now he has condemned the residents of an entire American city. Where will he go from here?

Make no mistake about it, words matter. And, Mr. Trump's words are dangerous.

These words are more than a "dog-whistle." When such violent dehumanizing words come from the

President of the United States, they are a clarion call, and give cover, to white supremacists who consider people of color a sub-human "infestation" in America. They serve as a call to action from those people to keep America great by ridding it of such infestation. Violent words lead to violent actions.

When does silence become complicity? What will it take for us all to say, with one voice, that we have had enough? The question is less about the president's sense of decency, but of ours.

As leaders of faith who believe in the sacredness of every single human being, the time for silence is over. We must boldly stand witness against the bigotry, hatred, intolerance, and xenophobia that is hurled at us, especially when it comes from the highest offices of this nation. We must say that this will not be tolerated. To stay silent in the face of such rhetoric is for us to tacitly condone the violence of these words. We are compelled to take every opportunity to oppose the indecency and dehumanization that is racism, whether it comes to us through words or actions.

There is another moment in our history worth recalling. On January 21, 2017, Washington National Cathedral hosted an interfaith national prayer service, a sacred tradition to honor the peaceful transfer of political power. We prayed for the President and his young Administration to have "wisdom and grace in the exercise of their duties that they may serve all people of this nation, and promote the dignity and freedom of every person."

That remains our prayer today for us all.

*The Right Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde,
Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington
The Very Rev. Randolph Marshall Hollerith,
Dean of Washington National Cathedral
The Rev. Canon Kelly Brown Douglas, C
anon Theologian of Washington National Cathedral*

Trump Makes Everybody Near Him Look Bad

by Julian Sereno



Love him or loathe him, Donald Trump has a genius for making anyone who deals with him—friend or foe—look like fools.

This past month, Trump aimed vicious, vulgar, and vitriolic race-baiting against African-American and Muslim elected officials who abhor his political agenda.

The question arose: is Trump a racist? The answer: of course he is.

His incarnation as a politician began with a racist lie: that Obama's presidency was illegal and illegitimate because he was born in Kenya. After it was proven false, Trump doubled down on the lie.

When he announced his candidacy, Trump demonized millions of Mexicans without authorization, overwhelmingly honest, hard-working, dedicated to family, as rapists and drug traffickers.

His every action as president—from his cruelty separating families seeking sanctuary at the border and imprisoning them in private gulags to his praise of the murderous Nazis marching through Charlottesville—proves the man a racist through and through.

His racist pronouncements, of course, express the beliefs of his followers, who would get fired for expressing them at work and pilloried if they act it out, and it goes viral.

Trump brings out the worst in his supporters. He unleashes their inner intolerance. What ever else they do in their lives, his supporters in Greenville who chanted "Send Them Back" at four US Congresswomen of color will be forever red neck bigots, viral for posterity.

As far as Franklin Graham, Jerry Falwell Jr. and other fundamentalist high-rolling holy-rollers who embrace Trump are concerned, they might as well have grafted, horns, cloven hoofs and tails on them all. They betray the very Bibles they thump in praise of a lying, foul-mouthed, adulterous bully who boasts

about assaulting women. They've lost all moral authority, if they had any to begin with.

Then comes his administration and the decent public servants he undermined and threw under the bus. Such as former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, whom Trump humiliated by announcing he was betraying the Kurds, our loyal, steadfast allies who defeated ISIS. Mattis resigned and Trump didn't sell out the Kurds after all, at least not yet. And former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, who got sand-bagged in favor of son-in-law Jared Kushner, whose family owns rat-infested slums in Baltimore, among other places.

The list goes on.

Trump has proved Republican Senators mealy-mouthed and weak. None dare criticize him or anything he says unless they are not running for reelection. North Carolina's own Tom Tillis wrote an oped in the Washington Post about principled opposition to Trump's