

Every month since February 1987 the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation has produced one-hour TV programs on issues related to peace, social justice, economics, the environment, and nonviolence.

The Olympia FOR's program airs several times every week for the entire month on Thurston Community Television (TCTV), channel 22 for Thurston County's cable TV subscribers. You can see TCTV's schedule at www.tctv.net.

You can also watch the program described below (and more than 90 of our previous interview programs and special programs) at the Olympia FOR's website, www.olympiafor.org. Simply click the TV programs link to reach www.olympiafor.org/tv_programs.htm, scroll down, and click the program you want to watch.

Many of our website's TV program listings also include a .pdf document describing the program.

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"MILITARISM IS THE PROBLEM, NOT THE SOLUTION"

by GLEN ANDERSON, PRODUCER AND HOST OF THIS TV SERIES

Since World War II – and especially since the Soviet Union collapsed more than 20 years ago – the US has been the world's #1 military power. And, indeed, the US has used that military power continuously since the 1940s in many places throughout the world.

The justifying buzz word has always been "national security" – as if a bigger military, more nuclear weapons, and more military attacks on other countries would make our nation more secure. But even after all of this, Americans still feel insecure.

Indeed, when you look at how the US interacts with other nations around the world, you can see that the US government, US military power, and US economic power all feel confident that our nation can do whatever it wants.

Not everybody is happy about this. The writers of ancient Greek tragedies recognized the meaning of the Greek word *hubris* – the arrogance and the "pride that goes before a fall."

Militarism is always promoted as the solution. But what if militarism is actually the problem? What if excessive militarism actually hurts the U.S.?

This is the question that our two guests will explore during this hour.

- **Ellen Finkelstein** is the Organizer for the Western Washington Fellowship of Reconciliation (WWFOR). She brings to the FOR her decades of experience working for peace and social justice, and we very much appreciate her many skills as an organizer and trainer.
- **Larry Kerschner** also is active in the Western Washington FOR, and in our chapter in Lewis County, the Fire Mountain FOR. He is a Vietnam veteran who is

also active in Veterans for Peace and activities related to Vietnam, Korea and Afghanistan.

Excessive militarism is making us less secure. It is provoking new enemies and recruiting new terrorists. The US's endless "war on terror" is provoking new cycles of violence and terrorism, including what the CIA has called "blowback" in the form of terrorist attacks on the US abroad and at home.

Militarism is killing and disabling a whole generation of young Americans. Our troops experience PTSD, cycles of violence, unemployment, homelessness, etc. These problems escalated during the Vietnam war and escalated again with our wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. PTSD and other disabilities have become a public health epidemic, but treatment is not sufficient. We need prevention! Stop training young people to dehumanize and kill people, including themselves!

Excessive militarism wastes money we need for US domestic needs. US ranks low on many indicators of well-being and "security." Military spending hurts our economy. We need to "Bring Our Billion\$ Home," as the WWFOR and Olympia FOR campaign urges.

The military-industrial complex and permanent-war machine have captured our federal government, so militarism is beyond the control of Congress and the President. Perpetually escalating militarism dominates US foreign policy. News media have become very deferential to the military, and the military-industrial-congressional complex have used "military Keynesianism" to make states and congressional districts dependent on Pentagon pork.

Rather than protect our nation, excessive militarism is harming our nation. It is undermining U.S. democracy. It is corrupting our nation's soul. To save the U.S., we must scale back our militarism.