

NUMEROUS FEDERAL CRIMINAL STATUTE VIOLATIONS CITED, NO RESPONSE FROM STATE DEPARTMENT INSPECTOR-GENERAL

In sixteen U.S. cities, March 5 through 7, members of Veterans For Peace will hand deliver an exhaustively researched letter to U.S. State Department offices that has gotten no response from the department's Inspector-General since February 11.

The cities are Buffalo, New York, Minneapolis, St. Louis, Portsmouth, NH, Greensboro, NC, Boston, San Diego, Tucson, Chicago, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Bridgeport, CT, Los Angeles, Dallas and Houston.

Josh Paul, former State Department senior official who resigned over weapons shipments to Israel said, "The Secretary and all relevant officials under his purview should take this letter from Veterans For Peace with the utmost seriousness. It is a stark reminder of the importance of abiding by the laws and policies that relate to arms transfers."

The letter from Veterans For Peace alleges violations by U.S. government officials of:

The Conventional Arms Transfer Policy, which prohibits U.S. weapons transfers when it's likely they will be used by Israel to commit genocide; crimes against humanity; and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, including attacks intentionally directed against civilian objects or civilians or other serious violations of international humanitarian or human rights law, including serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against children. Dozens of authoritative complaints and referrals made by hospital administrators in Gaza, as well as by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Palestine Authority, South Africa, Turkey, Medecins sans Frontieres, UNRWA, UNICEF, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Norwegian Refugee Council and the World Food Programme, have confirmed that there is an ongoing human rights and humanitarian disaster due to Israel's cutoff of water and electricity, deliberate destruction of sewage infrastructure and delaying of aid shipments by Israeli forces.

The Foreign Assistance Act, which forbids the provision of assistance to a government which "engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights." Arms Export Control Act, which says countries that receive U.S. military aid can only use weapons for legitimate self-defense and internal security. Israel's genocidal campaign in Gaza goes way beyond self-defense and internal security.

The U.S. War Crimes Act, which forbids grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, including willful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, and unlawful deportation or transfer, perpetrated by the Israeli Occupying Forces.

The Leahy Law, which prohibits the U.S. Government from using funds for assistance to units of foreign security forces where there is credible information implicating that unit in the commission of gross violations of human rights.

The Genocide Convention Implementation Act, which was enacted to implement U.S. obligations under the Genocide Convention, provides for criminal penalties for individuals who commit or incite others to commit genocide.

Mike Ferner, VFP National Director, said, "Just as any good soldier can recognize when they are given an unlawful order, we believe some State Department staff are horrified at the orders they're given and will decide to uphold the law, find the courage to speak out and demand an end to the carnage. VFP enthusiastically supports Josh Paul for what

he did and we believe the public does, too. The IDF has killed over 30,000 Palestinians and is utterly destroying Gaza. These actions amount to genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, and VFP wants them investigated."

Veterans For Peace has over 100 chapters in the U.S. and since 1985 has exposed the true costs of war and militarism. Its goal is to abolish war as an instrument of national policy.

RECOGNIZING FORMER MAYOR CHRISTOPHER BROWN

HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor former Mayor Christopher Brown, a distinguished resident of Dumfries, Virginia, whose dedication and service have profoundly shaped his community.

Mr. Brown's roots run deep in Dumfries, where he has spent his life contributing to the town's growth and prosperity. As a former mayor, Mr. Brown played a pivotal role in shaping Dumfries' future, demonstrating exceptional leadership and vision during his tenure.

Beyond his public service, Mr. Brown continues to be a pillar of the community through his successful accounting firm. Established in 1987, his business has provided professional personal and business tax advice and preparation for more than three decades. His expertise and commitment to supporting local enterprises has been instrumental in fostering economic growth in Dumfries.

Mr. Brown's many contributions—as a lifelong resident, former mayor, and respected business owner—have left an indelible mark on the town. His accounting firm stands as a testament to his enduring commitment to the local business community.

Mr. Brown's unwavering dedication to Dumfries serves as an inspiration to all who strive to make a positive impact on their communities. His work ethic, business acumen, and public service exemplify the values we hold dear as Virginians.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing former Mayor Christopher Brown for his outstanding service and enduring commitment to the Town of Dumfries, Virginia. His legacy as a public servant, business leader, and admired community member will continue to influence and inspire future generations in Virginia.

RECOGNIZING RETIRED LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN PHILIP KOWZAN

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor retired Lieutenant Colonel John Philip Kowzan. A native of Spokane, Washington, Phil joined the United States Army in 1961 and selflessly served his Nation for 28 years. During his time in the mili-

tary, he was called upon to serve in Vietnam where he earned the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with 3 bronze service stars, and the Army Commendation Medal with 2 oak leaf clusters.

During his decorated military service, retired LTC Kowzan developed a profound respect for his fellow servicemembers. He saw firsthand the personal sacrifices of life and limb that his brothers and sisters in arms were prepared to make, as well as the invisible scars they would each carry home with them. Phil's profound understanding of these struggles motivated him to dedicate the remainder of his life to honoring those who answered our nation's call to service.

In 2001, Phil was asked to perform Taps in conjunction with a military funeral honors service for a longtime friend and fellow veteran. A musician at heart who played in a number of community bands through the years, he humbly accepted the request as a way of fulfilling the obligation cited by President Abraham Lincoln to "Honor to the soldier and sailor everywhere, who bravely bears his country's cause."

Thus began a 23-year long run as a bugler in Eastern Washington.

In 2010, the community's demand for Phil's services grew exponentially when the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs opened the Washington State Veterans Cemetery in Medical Lake, Wash. Without hesitation, Phil volunteered to assist with military funeral honors as one of the facility's three buglers. In the first year alone, he performed more than half of the 350 interments at the cemetery, which now performs more than 900 services annually. As the facility's primary bugler, Phil frequently makes the 46 mile round trip—as often as five times a week—to ensure every veteran receives the honor and recognition of a grateful nation they deserve.

Phil quickly earned a reputation amongst the region's funeral directors and soon began receiving calls to perform at community cemeteries, funeral homes, event halls, and public events across the state.

At 86 years young, Phil still carries the same burning desire he first felt 23 years ago to make sure no servicemember is ever left behind. In total, he has rendered honors for more than 3,000 military funerals in the Spokane area, making him an inspiration to every person he meets. Phil is a decorated veteran, committed public servant, and model citizen. He is simply the very best of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing retired LTC John Philip Kowzan for his more than 50 years of faithful, diligent service to our Nation.

HONORING RAY CARLSON AS MARQUETTE COUNTY VETERAN OF THE YEAR

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Ray Carlson for being named the Marquette County Veteran of the Year. I thank him for his immense sacrifices and love of country. Ray joined the United States Navy

shortly after graduating from Dollar Bay High School in 1969. After completing training at Great Lakes Naval Training Center, Camp Pendleton, and Coronado, Ray was deployed to Vietnam where he was stationed at TanAn and assigned to a Riverboat base, supporting combat operations throughout Vietnam as a central maintenance hub for U.S. watercraft.

Ray returned home from his service just in time for Thanksgiving in 1971, earning the National Defense Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and the Vietnam Campaign Medal for his time overseas. He began his civilian career in the Western UP at the White Copper Mine, and upon its closure, obtained a Civil Engineering Degree from Michigan Technological University. Ray went on to lead large civil engineering projects throughout the UP, culminating with the critical HW-58 project in Grand Marais. Ray's emphasis on service above self did not stop there, as he has been incredibly active within the Veteran community, serving in numerous capacities throughout the American Legion, including Post 44 Commander, 12th District Commander, and the 5th Zone Commander—spanning the entire Upper Peninsula over the past 20 years. As one of the most active and dedicated individuals in the region, Ray also serves the community during Bingo at the Jacobetti Home for Veterans and Marquette County Fair, Boys State, and the Post 44 youth raffle. Ray also has even coached baseball for the American Legion teams. Reigniting a passion for the sport he enjoyed in his childhood, Ray's time as a baseball coach has also helped many young men who received his mentorship and guidance—both on and off the field—as they have come through the Legion summer ball program.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Ray Carlson as the Marquette County Veteran of the Year. I thank him for a lifetime of dedicated service and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING PAUL CARVER

HON. DEBBIE LESKO

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Arizona's 8th Congressional District, it is my

honor to recognize Paul Carver, the Chairman of Republican Legislative District 2, which is in the north central area of Phoenix and has a population of over 246,000.

As chairman, Paul has worked tirelessly to educate, train, and inspire the next generation of citizens through civic engagement. His efforts to ensure Republicans are elected in Maricopa County have been instrumental to the success of Legislative District 2 and beyond.

I am thankful for Paul's leadership and dedication to conservative principles. I sincerely appreciate his service to the legislative district and to the state of Arizona.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF WILLIAM JOHN VUKOVICH, JR.

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, today, we gather to pay tribute to a legendary figure in the world of motorsports, Bill Vukovich, Jr., who recently passed away at the age of 79. Bill Vukovich, Jr., a native of Fresno, California, was not only a highly accomplished racer but also an integral part of a racing dynasty that left an indelible mark on the sport.

Bill Vukovich, Jr. began his racing career in 1965 and continued until 1983 competing in the IndyCar Series and USAC Championship. His talent and determination on the track earned him recognition, including the title of the 1968 Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the Year. Over the years, he participated in the Indy 500, achieving six top-10 finishes, including a memorable second-place finish in 1973.

However, what set the Vukovich family apart was not just individual success but their unique status as a three-generation racing family: Bill Vukovich, Jr., his father Bill Vukovich, Sr., and his son Bill Vukovich, III became the first, three-generation family, to compete in the prestigious Indianapolis 500. Their ascent from being local racing heroes in the heart of the Central Valley to the grandeur of the Indy stage deeply resonated with the local community, providing them with cherished figures to fervently rally behind. Tragically, alongside their triumphs, the Vukovich

family also endured profound losses. Bill Vukovich, Sr., a two-time Indianapolis 500 champion, tragically lost his life in a racing accident in 1955. Bill Vukovich, Jr. was just 11 years old at the time, forever marked by the radio broadcast that informed him of his father's fatal crash. Then, in 1990, another devastating blow struck the family when Bill Vukovich, III lost control of his car during practice at Mesa Marin Raceway in Bakersfield, resulting in a fatal crash. Bill Vukovich, Jr. was 46 when he tragically lost his only son, known affectionately as "Billy."

Reflecting on these unimaginable losses, Bill Vukovich, Jr. once said, "It happened to me twice—the impossible happened twice." The biography of the Vukovich family published in 2012, authored by Bones Bourcier, revealed the profound impact of these tragedies, especially the loss of Billy Vukovich, III, on Bill Vukovich, Jr., describing it as a "total loss of control."

In 1981, Bill Vukovich, Jr. was rightfully inducted into the Fresno Athletic Hall of Fame, joining his father, who was part of the 1959 induction class, and his son, who was honored in 2007. Throughout his racing career, Bill Vukovich, Jr. participated in 158 races, achieving Top 10 finishes an impressive 85 times. His journey included thrilling Saturday nights at Kearney Bowl, a now-defunct dirt oval track in southwest Fresno. In 2019, the City of Fresno paid tribute to the Vukovich racing legacy by placing a memorial in front of Selland Arena in downtown Fresno. Today, as we remember Bill Vukovich, Jr., we can find solace in the thought that he has found peace and has reunited with his beloved son.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my esteemed colleagues to join me in honoring the life and legacy of Bill Vukovich, Jr. His contributions to motorsports and the enduring spirit of the Vukovich racing dynasty will forever hold a special place in the heart of our community and the world of racing.