



Veterans for Peace, Chapter 72
Portland, Oregon

Veterans for Peace Chapter 72 would like to voice our extreme concern about ongoing brutality committed by too many members of our nation's police forces. As peace activists, believers in democracy, and supporters of those who are marginalized, we feel obligated to address this pressing issue.

Portland has seen more than its share of violence masquerading as police intervention. The nearly daily tear gassing of our city's residents in 2020 is just a small snippet of the systemic issues that exist in our city. As veterans, it is alarming to see fully militarized police forces roam our city streets. We implore the Portland Police Bureau to support the protected constitutional rights of our citizenry, while striving to find peaceful solutions rather than escalating existing tensions. Our city deserves public servants that respond using non-violent interventions. Period.

Part of our current national conversation is the basic right to exist as a person of color in the United States. Veterans for Peace Chapter 72 grieves the murders of our Black neighbors, our Indigenous neighbors, and our Neighbors of Color at the hands of under disciplined police agents. Many members of VFP Chapter 72 have seen combat and we are shocked to see wanton brutality in any arena. Extra-judicial murders are prohibited in war, yet we see similar killings carelessly carried out in cities all across our nation - Baltimore, Kenosha, Ferguson, Vancouver, and recently, the murder of Daunte Wright in Brooklyn Center, Minneapolis. The shooting of a white man apparently in mental health crisis by a police officer in Lents Park on April 16 is yet ANOTHER example of questionable, fatal violence by the Portland Police Bureau. Unfortunately, we know these police killings will not be the last, and that is unacceptable.

The international mission of Veterans for Peace is to strive for peace at home and abroad. As a Chapter, we would be remiss if we did not take this opportunity to denounce violence, especially by those who are charged to protect and serve. We look forward to a future of accountability, acknowledgement of systemic wrongs, de-escalation of militarized response in our city streets, and a stop to police brutality. Our humanity depends on it.