THE PROBLEM:
There are too many weapons in the world. Weapons that kill and maim, often after wars are long over. Weapons used needlessly to settle personal and international conflicts, conflicts that could be settled with less deadly means. Too many weapons, too many casualties. As veterans we have dealt first hand with the consequences of these weapons and we can work to eliminate them.

- Millions of unexploded cluster bomblets, landmines, and other unexploded remnants of war litter the globe. Each year 10,000 people are killed or maimed by this deadly garbage of war.

Landmines are being laid today. These - and mines from previous conflicts - continue to claim victims in every corner of the globe each day. There are tens of millions of landmines in the ground in 78 countries. 30-40 percent of mine victims are children under 15 years old. Landmines have injured and killed thousands of US and allied troops in every US-fought conflict since World War II, including recently in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Nearly 11,000 cluster bombs were dropped on Iraq during the US invasion, leaving behind thousands of unexploded bomblets which kill and maim Iraqis and our own troops. One US casualty is twenty year old Marine Lance Cpl. Jesus Suarez del Solar of Escondido, California, who died when he stepped on a bomblet while on a patrol outside Baghdad.

With cluster bombs, landmines, and unexploded remnants of war there is no warning – the victim triggers a sudden explosion and destruction. Tissue, bones, and muscles are destroyed, nerves severed. With horrific force the concussion thrusts fragments of the weapon, debris, dirt, and bone splinters into the body, causing severe injury or death.

- Globally 1,000 people die every day because of guns. In the United States each day over 80 people, 8 who are under nineteen, die because of gun violence. There are 640 million guns in the world; 8 million guns are manufactured every year, along with 10-14 billion units of ammunition, enough to kill everyone on earth twice over. Small arms proliferation is a local and global crisis - when guns are more easily available, people are more likely to die and be injured, whether on our streets or in war. It is easy for gun traffickers to arm dangerous criminals and others due to weak laws at the state, federal and international laws.

STEPS TOWARD A SOLUTION:

- The Mine Ban Treaty obligates its participants to completely and permanently discontinue the use, production, stockpile, and transfer of antipersonnel landmines; to destroy stockpiles; to clear mines within their own territories within ten years, and to provide continuing assistance to mine survivors.
- The **Cluster Bomb Treaty** bans the production and stockpiling of cluster bombs, millions of which lie unexploded across dozens of countries and have killed and maimed thousands of civilians.

- The **Small Arms Trade Treaty** would regulate the arms trade to prevent weapons falling into the hands of those who would use them for serious abuses and unlawful acts.

**Actions:**
- Educate ourselves and others about the deadly consequences of landmines, clusterbombs, and small arms proliferation/guns.

- Support local, national, and international organizations which work to reduce the number of landmines, clusterbombs, and guns.

- Demand that our members of Congress and our Administration:
  - have the US join the **Mine Ban, Cluster Bomb**, and **Small Arms Trade Treaties**.
  - support assistance programs for victims of landmines, cluster bombs, unexploded remnants of war, and gun violence.

We must do all we can to eradicate this man-made epidemic. When we use our resources, our experiences as veterans, to lessen the number of weapons globally and locally, we are working to remove death, suffering, and fear. We are working against the horrors of war and violence. We are working to building a safer world for all citizens. We are working for peace.

**Workshop facilitators:**

Mike Felker  
Veterans for Peace Chap. 31 member  
Hospital corpsman, USN, 8/68-8/72, Medic, First Marine Division Viet Nam, 12/69-12/70.  
*I am not an expert in these areas, but I draw on my experiences caring for the injured in Viet Nam and have been active in the campaign to ban landmines/clusterbombs/unexploded remnants of war, and gun violence for @ ten years.*  
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ELIMINATING WEAPONS OF INDIVIDUAL DESTRUCTION: LANDMINES, CLUSTERBOMBS & GUNS

Mike Felker, Veterans for Peace Chap. 31
Philadelphia
Medics treating the wounded, Iraq & Viet Nam.
Millions of unexploded cluster bomblets, landmines, and other unexploded remnants of war litter the globe. Each year 10,000 people are killed or maimed by this deadly garbage of war.
A landmine is designed to explode by the presence, proximity, or contact of a person and to injure or kill one or more persons.

The majority of victims of landmines are civilians.

The actual number of landmines currently in place globally is unknown, but estimates run as high as 60 million.
There are approximately 340 types of landmines available globally from arms dealers.

- Besides the landmines already in place, many countries have large stockpiles.
Landmines cost as little as $3 to produce. It costs between $300 to $1,000 to locate and destroy a landmine.
Tripwire & pressure release type landmine mechanisms.
What happens to a leg when someone steps on a landmine.
Results of stepping on a landmine.
Rehabilitation for landmine victims includes prosthetics, wheelchairs & crutches & physiotherapy. Prosthetics range from very simple to technologically advanced.
Landmine detection/clearance

Landmine detection & clearance operations mainly make use of 3 methods:

- Manual
- Mechanical
- Animals
Cluster Bombs

- Cluster bombs are dropped from the air and are designed to disperse bomblets over areas as large as several football fields, with a wide radius of death and destruction.
- Cluster bombs are useful to the military as they saturate an area with explosives and tiny flying shards of steel.
- Cluster bombs have a high initial failure rate which results in numerous explosive "duds" that pose the same problems as landmines. When the bomblets contained inside cluster bombs fail to explode on contact as intended, they become in effect landmines - volatile, deadly remnants of war.
Cluster Bombs

- Cluster bombs have killed and injured thousands of civilians & military personnel during the last 40 years and continue to do so today. 34 countries are known to have produced over 210 different types of cluster bombs.
- More than two dozen countries have been affected by the use of cluster bombs. Between nine and 27 million unexploded cluster bombs remain in Laos from U.S. bombing campaigns in the 1960s and 1970s.
- The detection and clearance procedures for cluster bombs are similar to those used for landmines.
And like landmines, cluster bombs kill and injure long after a war ends – the injuries and treatment of cluster bomb victims are similar to that from landmines. Multiple injuries raise the level of pain and suffering, resulting in prolonged and difficult medical treatment which in developing countries is limited at best.
Gun Violence

- Globally 1,000 people die each day due to guns.
- Guns have made a combat zone of our country.

Virginia Tech victims
Guns available on the web; just click & shoot.

“When your first shot must count - choose Impact Guns.”
Gun violence is an international public health crisis; it is a preventable cause of widespread death, injury and suffering. For every person who dies from a gunshot wound, at least two others are shot and survive. Death and injuries from guns also have devastating psychological, economic, and societal consequences. Gun violence prevention involves reducing people's exposure to weapons, reducing access to guns, and reducing the lethality of guns - for example by banning the most destructive weapons, such as assault rifles.
What we can do to eliminate weapons of individual destruction:

Educate ourselves and others about the deadly consequences of landmines, clusterbombs, and guns.

Support local, national, and international organizations which work to reduce the number of landmines, clusterbombs, and guns, and provide victim support – info about some of these groups follows.

Demand that our members of Congress and our Administration have the US join the Mine Ban, Cluster Bomb, and Small Arms Trade Treaties. and support The Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act.
The USCBL is a coalition of more than 400 U.S.-based organizations working to end the scourge of landmines and cluster bombs.

“Cluster munitions will not be used where civilians are known to be present or in areas normally inhabited by civilians”
—Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act (S. 416/H.R. 981)

The Pentagon says this legislation would infringe on its ability to combat terrorism. The U.S. has used cluster munitions in civilian populated areas of three countries in the last ten years.

Urge your Senators and Representative to support the Cluster Munition Civilian Protection Act (S. 416/H.R. 981).
A focus of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines is to have countries, including the US, join the Mine Ban Treaty. The treaty is the most comprehensive international instrument for ridding the world of the scourge of mines.

When they join the Mine Ban Treaty, countries commit to:

- not use, develop, produce, stockpile, or transfer landmines;
- destroy mines in their stockpiles;
- support efforts to clear mines;
- support mine survivors, their families & communities in receiving assistance.
Coup in Honduras: armed forces misuse weapons

International Action Network on Small Arms – www.iansa.org
The PATH Coalition is a unified group of organizations dedicated to ending illegal handgun trafficking in the state of Pennsylvania. Through public education, grassroots and media campaigns, and direct lobbying, PATH is working to enact legislation that will limit handgun purchases to one per person per month.

www.pathcoalition.org/
Monday, May 29 2006

Every day is Memorial Day By Mike Felker

For those who have lost loved ones to handguns, every day is Memorial Day. And there are many, many people who can commemorate this holiday, both here and throughout the nation.

Every day in the United States, 77 people are shot to death. They are the casualties of war, a war caused by guns. That’s almost 30,000 Americans killed annually by firearms.

By comparison, during the many years of the Vietnam War, about 58,000 thousand Americans died. I got to see the victims of those shootings close up as a medic in Vietnam. The last minutes of their lives remain in my memory.

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