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Notes from editor (not for publication):



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 Vermont guardsmen are in harm's way. And for what?

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

2 'Will Vermonters allow our representatives to wallow in
3 fecklessness as an unstable president wields power in a way that
4 endangers not just us, but the entire planet?'

####END SUBHED####

5 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

6 THE WORST HAS HAPPENED. Donald Trump is starting a
7 war, and will most likely get a very bad one.

8 The Vermont National Guard has been sent to the Middle
9 East. Guardsmen will be put in harm's way and risk being
10 involved in what could easily become a major conflagration.

11 And for what? Iran poses no threat to us. Iran's nuclear
12 program has been severely damaged by U.S. bombing. Iran itself
13 is unstable, and only by extreme state violence has the country
14 been able to quell fomenting unrest among its own population.

15 But who is now benefitting from military action against
16 Iran?

17 Israel.

18 Israel is pulling out all the stops to fully annex not only
19 Gaza, but the West Bank as well, continuing their genocide,
20 determined to drive the Palestinian people into becoming a mere
21 memory of what once was, as they consolidate their stranglehold
22 of a greater Israel, running from the river to the sea.

23 Once again, Israel's prime minister, Benjamin
24 Netanyahu, is working his mysterious magic on Donald Trump,
25 having our president do Israel's bidding while offering nothing in
26 return except heartbreak, destruction, and dishonor.

27 * * *

28 THE VERMONT National Guard is supposed to be under
29 the leadership of Gov. Phil Scott. It's supposed to be a state entity
30 to be controlled by the federal government only in times of war
31 or when bona fide exigencies of national security demand it.

32 But has the governor raised an outcry? Has he gone toe
33 to toe with Trump and done his best to prevent brave Vermonters
34 from being used as pawns in a shameful political game?

35 He knows how to exercise his duty; he did so by
36 declining to send Vermonters to Washington, D.C. last year
37 during one of Trump's first abuses of the Guard.

38 He saved them from the ignominy of picking up trash on
39 the National Mall, but he doesn't lift a finger or say a word to
40 prevent them from being sent home in caskets fighting in a
41 Middle East conflict that doesn't even have a fig leaf of
42 congressional cover for its legitimacy.

43 And what are our representatives in D.C. doing? Making
44 their standard statements without any significant follow-up
45 action.

46 “These are actions of war, and my very strong view is if
47 the president wants to do that, he has to go to Congress to get an
48 authorization,” said U.S. Sen. Peter Welch, D-Vermont.

49 “[We] received zero notice, information, or clarity about
50 the location, duration, and purpose of this deployment. This is
51 not normal, nor should it be tolerated,” said U.S. Rep. Becca
52 Balint, D-Vermont.

53 “We must make sure the United States does not get
54 involved in yet another war and destabilize another region,”
55 independent U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders told WCAX.

56 These statements were reported in December of 2025. In
57 reaction to the recent news that F-35s are being deployed, we get
58 this from Welch: “Both Bernie and I are adamantly opposed to
59 that executive overreach. It’s extremely dangerous.”

60 Is this really the best we can do? Are we really going to
61 acquiesce to Trump’s warmongering as he risks the lives of those
62 in the Guard?

63 Has the Congress — which is the only branch of
64 government that can declare war and which has at its disposal
65 the [War Powers Resolution](#) — really been reduced to its
66 members being bystanders who simply state their concern as they
67 accept that they have given up their power and do nothing about
68 it?

69 And will Vermonters allow our representatives to wallow
70 in fecklessness as an unstable president wields power in a way
71 that endangers not just us, but the entire planet?

72 * * *

73 THIS LAST QUESTION is no longer rhetorical. It is clearly up
74 to us to act now.

75 Our biggest power is a national strike. There is
76 unyielding resistance by Americans to stop working, even for
77 short amounts of time. But as much as it may cost us for the
78 duration of a strike or strikes, that cost will be much less than
79 what we will pay to live under violence-enforced fascism, which
80 is our new reality.

81 Please take a deep look inside of yourself and see if you
82 can believe in our power, if you have the wherewithal to
83 advocate and work to convince others of the efficacy of a strike(s)
84 strategy.

85 There will be strike calls in the coming months. We must
86 be ready to answer the call, and exercise our power before we no
87 longer have it.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

88 **DAN DEWALT**, a frequent contributor to these pages and
89 one of the founders of this newspaper, writes that if he didn't love
90 his country, he "wouldn't spend so much time trying to get it to
91 live up to its purported principles."

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

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