

**Media Advisory/For Immediate Release:** April 4, 2016

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**Martin Luther King Memorial Community Reading**  
**“Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence”**  
**Public shared reading in 16 parts**

**What:** In commemoration of the 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary his assassination, multi-generational peace and justice activists will do three public, participatory readings of Dr. King’s prophetic speech, “[Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence](#),” delivered by King on April 4, 1967, exactly one year before his death.

**When: Tuesday, April 5, 2016.** There will be three readings, starting at **12 noon, 2 pm and 4:30 pm**. Each reading will take approximately one hour, with 16 readers taking turns.

**Where: Oscar Grant/Frank Ogawa Plaza**, in the amphitheater in front of Oakland City Hall, near 12<sup>th</sup> Street City Center BART.

**Photo Op: Oakland youth**, members of [Peace in Action](#), will sing anthems from the civil rights movement and Black Lives Matter at 4:15 pm and will take part in the final reading starting at 4:30 pm. A closing ceremony will follow the reading at approximately 5:30 pm.

**Why:** April 5 – 18, 2016 have been designated as [Global Days of Action on Military Spending](#) by the International Peace Bureau, to challenge military spending and call for redirection of funds to meet human needs. Military spending [https://www.nationalpriorities.org/analysis/2016/president-obamas-2017-budget/?can\\_id=fad9f03a1ad8cb9342ab8725d2086d01&source=email-join-the-global-days-of-action-on-military-spending-april-5-18&email\\_referrer=join-the-global-days-of-action-on-military-spending-april-5-18&email\\_subject=join-the-global-days-of-action-on-military-spending-april-5-18&link\\_id=8](https://www.nationalpriorities.org/analysis/2016/president-obamas-2017-budget/?can_id=fad9f03a1ad8cb9342ab8725d2086d01&source=email-join-the-global-days-of-action-on-military-spending-april-5-18&email_referrer=join-the-global-days-of-action-on-military-spending-april-5-18&email_subject=join-the-global-days-of-action-on-military-spending-april-5-18&link_id=8) continues to increase, with the Administration’s 2017 budget request for the Pentagon, nuclear weapons and aid to foreign militaries rising to nearly \$623 billion. Endless U.S. wars and occupations have cost millions of lives and trillions of dollars, while the needs of growing numbers of Americans go unmet. Dr. King’s “Beyond Vietnam” speech laid bare the relationship between U.S. wars abroad and the racism and poverty being challenged by the civil rights movement at home. ***“I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today--my own government.”*** King’s words are as relevant today as nearly half a century ago. Organizers of the readings honor the **full** legacy of his work opposing militarism, racism and poverty.

**Sponsoring Organizations:** Asian-Americans for Peace & Justice; BAY-Peace: Better Alternatives for Youth; Bay Area Black Worker Center; Bay Area Women in Black; Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI); East Bay Peace Action; East Point Peace Academy; Environmentalists Against War; Haiti Action Committee; Jewish Voice for Peace-Bay Area;

Labor Committee for Peace & Justice; Nafsi Ya Jamii; Peace & Solidarity Committee of SEIU 1021; Priority Africa Network; United for Peace & Justice-Bay Area; Western States Legal Foundation; Women's International League for Peace & Freedom (SF & East Bay)

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