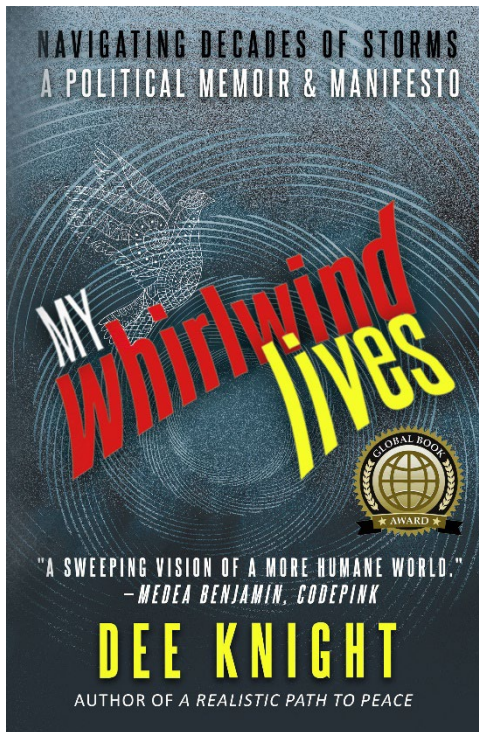




New from **Solidarity Publications**

Media Contact: Dee Knight, deeknight816@gmail.com



My Whirlwind Lives

Navigating Decades of Storms

A POLITICAL MEMOIR

Our recent storms didn't start in 2020 or 2016. They started decades ago in the 1960s – a whirlwind of threatened nuclear catastrophe, then police dogs and rednecks terrorizing civil rights marchers down south, then Vietnamese children fleeing from napalm flames. Then draft notices to go to Vietnam to “fight commies.” A small town boy started by supporting rightist Goldwater against the “peace candidate” Johnson, but rapidly changed in the face of the civil rights and anti-war movements, and started a quest that hasn't ended yet.

Nonfiction | Political Manifesto

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Author Bio

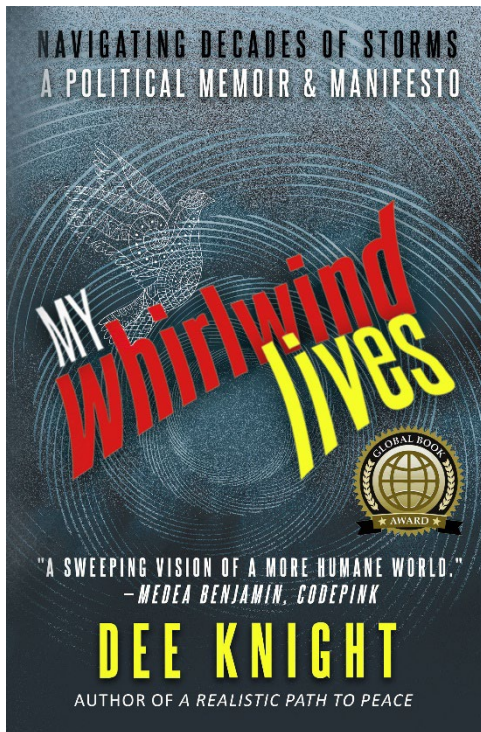
An editor of Amex-Canada (The American Exile/Expatriate in Canada) from 1969 to 1974, Dee Knight helped organize the National Council for Universal Unconditional Amnesty (NCUUA) from 1973 to '77. Following decades of anti-imperialist activism, he is now a member of Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), and serves on the DSA International Committee's Anti-War subcommittee.

Keywords:

non fiction, memoir, political manifesto, Vietnam war, 1960s, civil rights, anti-war, movement, revolution, justice



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Advanced Praise for My Whirlwind Lives

My Whirlwind Lives is a fast-paced and fascinating tour of a life filled with politics, passion and purpose. Knight takes us through decades of turmoil in the U.S. and overseas, and decades of movement building against war, injustice and destruction of the planet. The book is infused with Knight's sweeping vision of a more humane world and his infectious sense of optimism. Read it and act.

– **Medea Benjamin, Co-founder, CodePink (codepink.org)**

“Being a revolutionary is like being a midwife for the future,” writes Dee Knight. “While there is blood and pain, its essence is hope and excitement for a future we can begin to see ahead of us.” From the movement against the Vietnam War in the 1960s, to revolutions in Portugal, Africa, and Latin America, to today's movement for the Green New Deal, these stories of how real change happens are full of inspiration and valuable lessons for other aspiring revolutionaries. This book makes a compelling case for the inseparability of the movements for an end to unjust war, for the rights of resisters, and for racial and economic justice. It's a strong reminder that while revolutionary change is rarely quick or predictable, it requires that we keep organizing across our communities to be ready for these moments of opportunity. With some luck and perseverance, another such opportunity may be right around the corner.

– **Jeff Paterson, founder, Courage to Resist (couragetoresist.org)**

Dee Knight has written a most compelling account of his personal odyssey and political evolution. From a high schooler for Barry Goldwater, then dropping out of college to campaign for Eugene McCarthy in 1968, he became a leading Vietnam war resister in Canada. He witnessed revolutions in Portugal and Nicaragua, and became a committed socialist. This life story shares much with that of thousands of young people whose lives and world views changed when they were pushed to participate in unjust U.S. wars.

– **Gerry Condon, Vietnam era GI resister and former president of Veterans For Peace**

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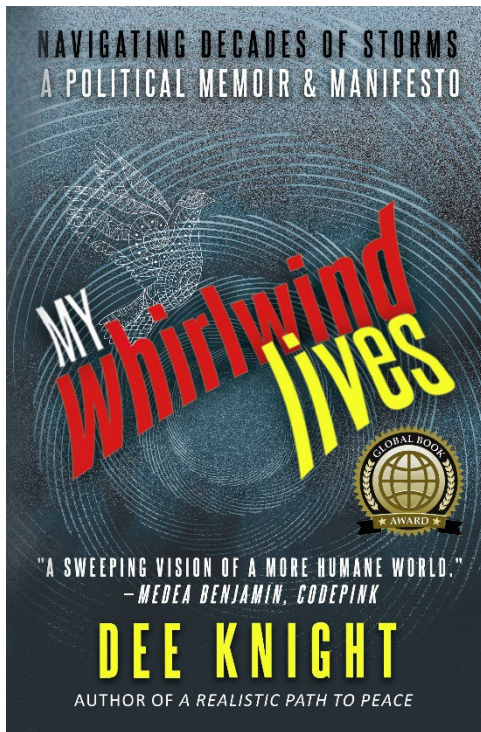
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EXCERPT

When I phoned home from Madison, Wisconsin, in January 1968 to tell my parents I had left college to try and end the war, my mother said she hoped I would not get in trouble with the government. I told her the government had already gotten in trouble with me. In August 1968, I participated in the “battle of Chicago” at the Democratic National Convention – not as a “front liner,” really more of an observer. The cops’ message was clear: standing against the war would get your head beat.

After the Chicago mayhem I caught a ride to Toronto, Canada – aware it would take a long time to stop the war machine. I wrote home to tell my parents I was in Canada. Four years later I wrote again, to say charges against me for refusing the draft had been dismissed on a technicality. I returned to the U.S. briefly that year, to build support for a true amnesty for war resisters of all kinds. Then I went back to Canada, to continue working with Amex-Canada, the American exile/expatriate war resister group and magazine that led the amnesty movement from 1972–’77.

All this was a prelude for me. During the most intense anti-war protests, from 1969 to ’71, I was out of the country. But after the draft refusal charges against me were dismissed in early 1972, I became a leader of the fight for amnesty. It was a years-long slog, with intensive organizing among exiled war resisters in Canada, Sweden, France and England; alliance development with anti-war Vietnam veterans; constant media work, as well as national speaking tours and meetings to develop a winning coalition for amnesty. There were some “magic moments,” like the live national TV nomination of a war resister for vice president at the 1976 Democratic National Convention, and “surfacing” military resister Gerry Condon at a Washington, DC conference despite the fact he had been court-martialed and carried a ten-year prison sentence. Over those years we won much of what we had demanded, and the experiences of that time helped shape my commitment to change.

Visiting countries where revolutions were actually happening – Portugal during the “Carnation Revolution” of 1974–75, and Sandinista Nicaragua during the 1980s – gave me insight into real revolutions, and the fact that the U.S. government would always put them down, whatever it took.

Now there’s the battle for a Green New Deal to save the planet; In 2020 street protests raged in cities across the country and the world, to say Black Lives Matter. The official U.S. response to the coronavirus pandemic caused hundreds of thousands of deaths, and brought on the worst depression since the 1930s.

What’s the connection among all these things? They’re all part of reclaiming a peaceful, just and sustainable planet, and our lives.

I jumped into the whirlwind more than 50 years ago, hoping and expecting change to come quickly and easily. Now I know better. But the change is coming. There’s a hurricane outside. It’s early to say how long it will last, or what it will bring. My hope is it will stimulate us not merely to save the planet but to help the people of the USA and the world escape from capitalist never-never land, and bring about a world we can believe in.

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