

Requiem for the Antiwar Movement

By [Cindy Sheehan](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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“When you vote for war, don’t be surprised when you get it.” Cindy Sheehan

“I will send at least two additional combat brigades to Afghanistan.”
Presidential Candidate Barack Obama

“This war (Iraq) prevents us from tackling every serious threat that we face, from a resurgent al-Qaeda in Afghanistan to a hostile Iranian regime intent on possessing nuclear weapons.” Candidate Barack Obama

“And if we have actionable intelligence about high-level al-Qaeda targets (in Pakistan), we must act if Pakistan will or cannot.” Candidate Barack Obama

This article and these observations are going to piss some people off—but oh well. You will be angry with me, even though I am not the one who is ordering more war, paying for more war, torturing people and imprisoning them without due process, destroying the economy and the environment, blah, blah, blah. I have developed an incredibly thick skin and if I rankle, it’s because I think time is running out to halt the disastrous trajectory this planet (via the US Military Corporate Complex) is on. I promise that I am not writing this because I am holding protests and no one is coming—these thoughts have been percolating in me for months now. (Note: Remember that old saying: “What if they gave a war and nobody came?” Well, here in DC I am living the opposite: “What if they gave an antiwar protest and nobody came?”)

My grandbabies and other people’s grandbabies WILL NOT live in a world where war for profit is so normal that state-sanctioned violence is rarely even questioned—and if it is, then the person questioning is the “looney tunes,” the “mama moonbat,” the “radical.” That is one seriously messed-up world. You know it is and we are the only ones who have the key to unmessing it.

Last week, the Democratically controlled House of Representatives voted to give Barack Obama 33 billion more dollars to prosecute two idiotic and ill-advised wars. Of course they did—it wasn’t the first time since 2007 that a Democratic Congress voted to fund wars, and it won’t be the last—do you all know why? BECAUSE THE DEMOCRATS DON’T WANT PEACE—THEY ARE JUST ONE-HALF OF THE “WAR PARTY.”

Why else did the Democrats vote for more war, more death and more destruction? If you are a Democrat and voted for one of these scum—did you vote for them hoping that you would get more war? Did you vote for Obama hoping that he would dig this country into a deeper hole, and do you still believe that fucking things up even more is the way to solve problems?

Do you all know what else? The wars that were begun in the Bush presidency and fully

funded and increased during the Obama regime belong to everyone who voted for Obama, too. If you listened to what Obama said, and not just how he said it, then you would have heard him promise you that he was going to SEND MORE TROOPS TO AFGHANISTAN. You would have heard him say that nothing was “off the table” for dealing with Iran.

During the campaign, many colleagues and friends of mine, assured me that Obama was just saying this hostile crap to “get elected” and once he was elected that he would “do the right thing.” Well, first of all, why support such a pandering Jackwagon, and secondly, how has that ever worked? Three days after Obama swore to uphold and defend the Constitution, he drone-bombed a “target” in Pakistan killing 3 dozen civilians—and since that day he has elevated the art of drone bombings to new heights, while the so-called antiwar movement looks on in silent complacency and while Democratic operatives disguised as antiwar groups are hoping against hope that Obama comes out strong with a new antiwar marketing campaign to assure his “re-election.” Even though not one progressive issue has been propagated during his term, these war supporters are looking forward to another four years of the dance of death. Right foot kill—left foot torture—spin around for environmental devastation—allemande left for health care fascism—and shimmy right for bankster bailouts. Wasn’t eight years of this crap during the Bush stain enough for y’all?

Many antiwar groups and people who claim they are for peace lose their minds during election season thinking that the razor-thin difference between the Democrat and Republican is enough to go ape-shit crazy in working for the Democrat. Just take the last two Democratic candidates, for example. Kerry and Obama both supported more war. An “antiwar” movement de-legitimizes itself when it works hard for a candidate who does not promise total and rapid withdrawal of troops from wherever they happen to be at the time AND does not promise to end war as an imperial tool of corporate conquest.

The majority of the so-called antiwar movement, in fact, voted for a candidate that PROMISED to contract one war only to be able to profoundly EXPAND another. Obama all along said that he is not against all war, just “dumb wars.” If there existed an antiwar movement that had integrity—it would have said that “all wars are dumb,” and we withhold our support for just another dyed-in-the-wool warmonger.

What do we do now that we have another two and a half years of a hawk who thinks it is just hunky-dory that his supporters are under the delusion that he is a dove—he was awarded the war-establishment’s highest prize wasn’t he? He is, after all, a Nobel Laureate.

First of all, voting just doesn’t cut it. Realistically, our choices are between War Party Candidate A and War Party Candidate B. A true peace candidate is marginalized, metaphorically spat upon, and reviled. This is not a nation that honors peace and non-violence. From the top down, we are a violent nation—so from the bottom up, we have to restructure society. Liberate yourself and remove your Obama bumper sticker that has a peace sign instead of the “O.” If you are antiwar, you know in your heart that he is not a peace monger.

Secondly, our resources and energy are stretched thin. We live in a credit based economy where good jobs are scarce. Many people, who have the same values, in this almost value-free society, constantly tell me that they would be with me if they could afford it.

Since my son was killed, which was as violent of a paradigm shift as anyone should have to endure, I have whittled my life down to a bare minimum. I have no car. I have no pets. I have no plants. I have no credit cards. My income is based on my donations from my itinerant peace travels and book sales. I have moved eight times since Casey died and now I can move with one small u-haul. I have a cell phone and computer, a bed, clothes, a few dishes, a few valued books and peace paraphernalia and pictures of my children and grandbabies.

As HD Thoreau said: “You don’t own your possessions, they own you.” This consumer orgiastic society makes us literal slaves to a system that is detrimental to our health. Freeing oneself from those chains frees one to be a full-time, or near full-time activist. “Simplify, simplify, simplify.”

Massive antiwar protest in this country is dead. We may as well acknowledge that and just bury the corpse, mourn, and then figure out a better way of doing things.

In the Christian tradition, death was only a prelude to new and better life and farmers will tell you that a seed has to die before a health-nourishing plant can be born and then there’s the ever ubiquitous example of the ugly, hairy, and yucky caterpillar being reborn as a magnificent and beautiful butterfly. Have I hammered you with enough clichés yet?

The key to turning this caterpillar of a country into a beautiful butterfly is in Peace and recognizing that no matter if one is Bush, Obama, McCain or Palin—these people don’t want Peace, but we do.

I think we lose the raw humanity of war when we allow ourselves to wallow in War Party politics. When the Democratic Wing of the War Party took over the mis-management of the Empire, the anti-war movement was effectively neutralized even though the wars weren’t.

So after we are done mourning, we get together as one human family to organize something that will bring positive change. We are not enemies with each other—we may be “enemies of the state,” but the state is our enemy.

No more marching in circles, it makes us dizzy.

No more signing petitions, it gives us writer’s cramp.

No more calling Congress-scum, the war machine is its master.

The establishment wants us to think that this busy-work has a chance to be effective—but when is the last time any of these tactics worked on a Federal level? Your president or your congress rep couldn’t care less what you think or want. Your vote doesn’t even count—in case you haven’t heard, they steal votes and falsely manipulate you, anyway.

I am going to close with my organization’s motivational quote. [Peace of the ACTION](#) takes our inspiration from a Mario Savio quote that he said on the steps of Sproul Hall at UC Berkeley, 46 years ago:

“There comes a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart that you can’t take part, you can’t even passively take part. You have to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the levers, upon all the apparatus and you’ve got to make it stop. And you’ve got to

indicate to the people who own it, to the people who run it, that unless you're free, the machine will be prevented from working at all."

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