

War dominated Foreign Policy is Destroying the Economy and National Security

Join Peace Vet-Led Protest at White House on December 16th

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The White House is in the midst of a strategic review of Afghanistan. This review is coming at a time when the reality is hard to ignore: Afghanistan cannot be won, the cost is escalating at a time when the U.S. economy is in collapse and the war is undermining U.S. national security and the rule of law. It is time to end the war-based foreign policy of the United States.

Opposition to war is growing. Sixty-one House members wrote president Obama last month calling for an end to the Afghan war. The letter was cosigned by 57 Democrats and 4 Republicans. They wrote: "This has become the longest war in US history. The rate of casualties is at an all-time high. And we have already spent \$365 billion on this unwinnable war." This reflects the views of Americans. A recent poll conducted by Quinnipiac University found that 50 percent of those surveyed said the United States should not be involved in Afghanistan, compared to 41 percent who opposed the war in September.

Antiwar advocates are standing behind the peace veterans who will be leading the largest veterans led civil resistance action against war in many years on December 16th at the White House. Veterans for Peace and other anti-war groups, including my organization Voters for Peace, will be protesting the wars in which the U.S. is engaged. For more information visit www.EndTheseWars.org.

Navy veteran, Mike Ferner, who serves as National President of Veterans For Peace, last week wrote President Obama requesting a meeting and letting him know that if they do not hear from him, veterans will come to the White House until they meet President Obama "or until we are dragged away in full view of our nation and the world—military veterans, carrying their nation's flag, seeking a meeting with their president in the season of Peace." Ferner reports "The action in D.C. on December 16 has all the markings of the spark that could light a prairie fire. Enthusiastic responses are coming in from all corners of the country as people hear about this 100% grassroots, spontaneous effort."

Other vets explain why they are participating. Leah Bolger, who served in the Navy from 1980-2000; and is a National Vice-President of Veterans for Peace says she is "shamed by the actions of my government and I will do everything in my power to make it stop killing innocent people in my name."

Army veteran, Tarak Kauff, sums up the views of many peace vets saying: "War for empire, endless and cruel war, resulting in suffering, destruction and death for millions, a war

economy here at home that steals from ordinary citizens and makes the few enormously wealthy – these are powerful reasons for us to put our bodies on the wheels, the levers, the apparatus of the war-making machine and demand that it stop. Enough is enough. One innocent child killed or maimed is enough, let alone thousands. There is no glory, no heroism, no good wars, no justification whatsoever; it is all of it, based on lies.”

There is growing recognition of the connections between war and the economy. One of those who has decided to participate in the peace event is Margaret Flowers, MD, who is most known for her activism for real health care reform, improving Medicare and making it available to everyone. She explains her participation by noting the connection between war and “social and economic justice” and to achieve those goals we “must stand together to demand an end to all wars; the external wars that our nation wages on people around the world and the internal war being waged against the people of America through policies that put corporate greed over our needs for jobs, education, food and healthcare.”

Indeed, an analysis of the U.S. debt demonstrates how “the U.S. central government deficit problem has one source – addiction to war and empire. That addiction has led to borrowing on an unprecedented scale, making it impossible for the U.S. to stimulate its economy through accumulated savings and making it increasingly nervous about the accelerating practice of borrowing on a mass scale. The Quantitative Easing approach – creating money out of nothing – has been made inevitable by the massive deficits used to sustain empire abroad.”

There are many reasons to join the peace vets on December 16th. Former New York Times war correspondent and noted author, Chris Hedges who will be joining the protest, writes that the antidote for loss of hope is action “anything that seeks to draw the good to the good, nourishes our souls and holds out the possibility that we can touch and transform the souls of others. Hope affirms that which we must affirm. And every act that imparts hope is a victory in itself.” In short — restore hope, take action.

Everyday the news reports the corruption of U.S. foreign policy, how the United States is killing civilians, incarcerating thousands without trials, participating or allowing torture, spying on diplomats and on and on. The bad news is never ending. The way to counteract the bad news of U.S. wars is to stand up against them. This is a critical moment. The Obama administration is conducting a review of Afghanistan and was just beaten in the mid-term elections. His base is angry over his war and economic policies. While no one single demonstration or action will end the wars, building a movement to do so will – in fact, an independent movement calling for an end to military-based foreign policy is a critical ingredient to ending U.S. wars.

Join us on December 16th. For more information visit www.EndTheseWars.org.

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