

Stop These Wars or We'll Fill Your Jails

By [David Swanson](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

Global Research, November 29, 2010

29 November 2010

Here's an easy question: would you rather go to jail for a few hours with a bunch of friends or die?

Here's a poorly kept secret: the wars that a majority of Americans want ended are not ending, and the war machine that a majority of Americans want cut back is growing.

Here's a situation that is not secret at all but too horrifying for us to acknowledge: if the war machine continues on its current course, we will not survive it economically, environmentally, or with any civil liberties or representative government intact. If we do not reach those catastrophes it will be because blowback or nuclear proliferation takes us out first.

You may not die for the Pentagon, but if you do not it will be your children or grandchildren. Would you rather go to jail for a few hours with a bunch of friends or see your grandchildren killed? Is the question getting easier?

Here's a well kept secret: many Americans are doing something about it, and Veterans for Peace is taking the lead. We're going to the White House on Thursday, December 16th: <http://stopthesewars.org>

You may have other obligations, but do they outweigh what's at stake here? How about this question: If you cannot risk arrest at the White House with us on December 16th to stop these wars, can you be there in support? Can you help with transportation or take photos and shoot videos and write reports? If you cannot be there in support, can you phone Congress and the media and demand the defunding of the war machine and an end to wars opposed by majorities of Americans in every poll?

The last time I was arrested at the White House we were "processed" at a table outside a jail and never entered any jail at all. Yes, it takes hours to do what could take minutes. Yes, the handcuffs pinch. But doesn't the knowledge that we are bombing families in other countries pinch a little too?

Don't take it from me. Take it from these people who will also be there:

"I am 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." — Leah Bolger

"'....to protect and defend the Constitution...' I took that oath as a sailor, and later as a police officer. I don't consider that oath to have an expiration date because I believe in accountability, justice and peace. Where I come from, we say: 'You don't have to stand tall, but you've GOT to stand up.' Stand up

December 16, 2010, at the White House.” — Erik Lobo

“Besides causing untold suffering and destruction, our futile and unending wars distract us from addressing unprecedented humanitarian and planetary crises. To allow war to even exist dishonors the teachers of peace who came before us. To fail to oppose war is to submit to those who make war. I choose to honor the peace teachers; I choose to oppose and resist the war makers.” — Kim Carlyle

“As Obama, the Nobel Peace Prize winner of a year ago, embraces war on Afghanistan, Pakistan and Yemen, he’s joined by most all the Democratic Party, and pushed on by the cabal of Republican war-mongers newly dominant in Congress. Obama was the right man for the job of expanding US domination internationally, and domestic surveillance and police-state measures. He’s not solely responsible for the system.; neither is he a socialist, or illegitimate based on his birth. But we are right to be protesting at the White House now, as we were right when the Bush regime lived there. People who want to stop these wars being carried out in our name have to be visible and vocal about it, now!” — Debra Sweet

“I strongly and enthusiastically support these actions! May we move forward peacefully, nonviolently, and with great courage.” — Ron Kovic

“I speak and write a lot about these things; but there comes a time when if you don’t put your body on the line, then the speaking and writing becomes posturing. That time is now. December 16 at the White House. ” — Joel Kovel

“Those who know the full extent of America’s imperial reach have a unique obligation to let their fellow citizens know what is being done in all of our names. But it is more than an obligation for veterans, since many of us have served in America’s invasions and occupations abroad. Perhaps it is also a privilege, another chance to express our love for this country, this time putting their bodies on the line to demand that America once again join the peace loving nations of this world.” — Fred Nagel

“I listened today to Martin Luther King Jr.’s speech given at New York’s Riverside Church in 1967, ‘Why I Oppose the Vietnam War.’ If any of us don’t know it, make it a point to hear it. His truth is timeless. When I hear it, I feel as deeply as possible, the necessity and the responsibility to be a Veteran For Peace. My conscience, my refusal to let the world change me are in the forefront of my existence. I will be with my brothers and sisters on Dec. 16.” — Jay Wenk

“When Barack Obama claimed that by not prosecuting the war crimes and crimes against humanity of the previous administration we would be able to go into the future with our core values intact, he was condemning this country to have no moral future. He was, in effect, saying that our core values worth defending are imperialism and capitalism and hypocrisy. All three can only flourish in a climate of no accountability and a belief in the necessary ethic of collateral damage. It is our responsibility to change that.” — Robert Shetterly

“War for empire, endless and cruel war, resulting in untold 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 this vile war-making machine and demand that it stop. Enough is enough. There is no glory, no heroism, no good wars, no justification whatsoever, it is all, all of it, based on lies. I'll be in Washington on December 16 with other veterans, resisting this war mentality, demanding its end. — Tarak Kauff

"For what do I stand? First, I will not stand for: a Democrat, a Republican, a flag, a border, a government, or a war of any kind. I will stand for the People, to protect and defend the Constitution, for peace and justice. See you in Washington, D.C., December 16, Twenty-Ten." — Will Covert, Veterans For Peace

"I could not miss this manifestation of veterans' strong condemnation of the wars, and of Obama for continuing them. In this season of supposed peace on earth, we who previously carried out U.S. foreign policy with our bodies must speak out to say, 'NO MORE! Bring the troops home NOW!'" — Ellen Barfield

"We are at a critical time in world history. Will the Western democracies continue to develop along the lines of Rousseau, Voltaire, Jefferson, King, Chavez and company? Or does the future hold a feudal world committed to slavery and fascism? The extent to which we resist is the extent to which there is reason to hope. Our witness, even if ignored in our times, will be on record and will inspire democratic revolutionaries far into the future. — Doug Zachary

"The Empire has met the Resistance and it is us! 12.16.10. Washington. Be there!" — Mike Ferner

"I have three granddaughters whose futures will be bleak unless we can reverse the American slide into endless war. It's time to move the resistance up a notch. That's why I'll be joining the veteran-led civil resistance on December 16 at the White House." — Ken Mayers

"I'm joining my fellow veterans on December 16 because, plain and simple, it is the right thing to do. I am against war, murder, and torture. Enough! I have a beautiful daughter and a very cute goddaughter. I owe them my best effort towards achieving a more just world. When we all stand up for peace war will end." — Mike Tork

"The trip to Washington will be an opportunity to stand in solidarity with fellow engaged citizens who are paying attention. As much as it will be a privilege, it is an obligation to add another voice to the growing chorus objecting to obscene wars that serve none other than the rich and powerful. The majorities in the lands subject to our occupations and wars object to our presence, and we the people share more in common with the victims in those countries than we do with the war profiteers here at home. Though we can expect the mainstream media to give little notice to our presence in D.C., that failure will only serve to make these truths more evident." — Dud Hendrick

"I will not be silent. I'm going to the White House to demand an end to these wars!" — Mike Hearington

"All who resist keep hope alive. All who succumb to fear, despair and apathy become enemies of hope. They become, in their passivity, agents of injustice. If the enemies of hope are finally victorious, the poison of violence will become not only the language of power but the language of opposition. And those who resist with nonviolence are in times like these the thin line of defense between a civil society and its disintegration." — Chris Hedges

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