Topics   Bloggers   Events   War $ Donate   Daybreak   War Is A Lie   When the World Outlawed War   MIC at 50   Search

War Is A Crime .org

HumansForPeace.org -- HumanBeingsForPeace.org -- AfterDowningStreet.org

Home   About Us   Contact   Youtube   Images   RSS   FaceBook   Twitter   Search   Talk Nation Radio

YOU ARE HERE   Blogs / davidswanson's blog / Opposition to Iraq War May Save Syria

Opposition to Iraq War May Save Syria

By   **davidswanson** *- Posted on*   **29 August 2013**

Evidence of "weapons of mass destruction" is "no slam dunk," U.S. officials are saying this time around, reversing the claim made about Iraq by then-CIA director George Tenet.

Opposition to a U.S.-led attack on Syria is growing rapidly in Europe and the United States, drawing its strength from public awareness that the case made for attacking Iraq had holes in it.

A majority in the United States, still very much aware of Iraq war deceptions, opposes arming the "rebel" force in Syria, so heavily dominated by foreign fighters and al Qaeda. And a majority opposes U.S. military action in Syria.

But that public opinion is only just beginning to get expressed as activism. With Republicans more willing to actively oppose a war this time, and some section of Democrats still opposed, there's actually potential to build a larger antiwar movement than that of 2003-2006.

Thus far, however, what's discouraging an attack on Syria is the public uproar that was created back then over the disastrous attack on Iraq.

The nation of Iraq was destroyed. Millions of refugees still can't safely return. As with every other humanitarian war thus far, humanity suffered, and the suffering will last for ages. While the damage done to the United States itself doesn't compare with the damage done to Iraq, it has been severe enough to make many a near-sighted potential war supporter cautious.

The problem with attacking Iraq was not that the vast stockpiles of weapons were fictional. Had every claim been true, the war would have remained illegal, immoral, and catastrophic.

Were it true that the Syrian government really chose the moment of the U.N. inspectors' arrival to use chemical weapons, launching a U.S. war on Syria would still hurt the people of Syria -- who are overwhelmingly opposed to it, regardless of their level of support for their government.

A regional or even global war could result. The U.S. military is planning for such scenarios, as if preparing for the apocalypse while igniting it makes the action less insane.

A war of supposed humanitarian philanthropy should consider the value to humanity of the rule of law. Launching a war in violation of the Kellogg-Briand Pact, the United Nations Charter, and the U.S. Constitution hurts the rule of law.

A war of beneficial generosity should consider other possible medicines that lack the deadly side-effects of war. For example, the United States could easily stop supporting and arming abusive dictatorships in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Bahrain, Yemen, and Egypt, not to mention the horrors inflicted on Palestine by Israel.

A so-called good and noble war against the evil of chemical weapons should probably be launched by a nation that doesn't itself use chemical weapons. Yet, the United States used white phosphorous and napalm as weapons in Iraq, not to mention such internationally sanctioned weapons as depleted uranium and cluster bombs -- weapons the United States also sells to other governments regardless of their human rights records (including a big shipment of cluster bombs now headed to Saudi Arabia).

A humanitarian and just war should perhaps show equal concern for those humans killed with any kind of weapon. Bombing Syria would inevitably kill significant numbers of people. Isn't that a problem even if they're killed with the "right" kind of weapons?

Both sides in the war in Syria have killed large numbers of people. We have heard as many serious accounts of the rebels using chemical weapons as the government. Should indisputable facts establish that both sides have used those forbidden weapons, surely the proper response will not be to bomb both sides.

By joining in this war, on the side of an armed opposition dominated by people with no concern for democracy or human rights, the United States will make itself more hated in the region than its previous military actions already

have. While this war has nothing to do with defending the United States, it will in fact endanger it.

Here's what should be done instead: Pressure Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states and Turkey to stop arming one side, while pressuring Russia and Iran to stop arming the other. Insist on a cease-fire. Support U.N. inspections of the evidence of crimes by both sides. Provide humanitarian aid to Syria, Syrian refugees (now fleeing in greater numbers as the U.S. threatens to attack), and others suffering in the region. Support nonviolent democracy movements.

And why stop there? End the occupation of Afghanistan, which we think of as "ending" but which is still twice as large as when President Obama was elected. Stop arming brutal dictatorships and calling the weapons "aid." Close Guantanamo and other lawless prison sites. Halt U.S. drone and other missile strikes worldwide. Bring U.S. troops home from 175 nations. Spend 10% of the U.S. military budget providing the world with clean drinking water, food, and assistance in sustainable agriculture and energy.

Our options are not to do nothing or to bomb Syria into the sort of disaster created in Iraq. There is an alternative that benefits Syrians, makes us safer, and costs less in money, lives, and morality.

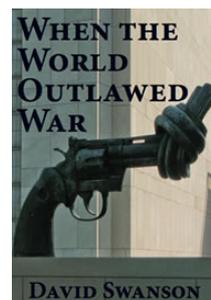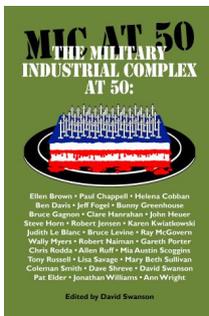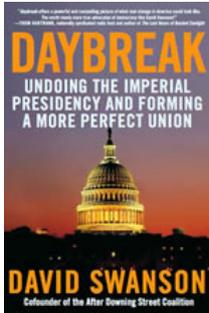davidswanson's blog   Login or register to post comments   **SHARE**   Email this page   Printer-friendly version
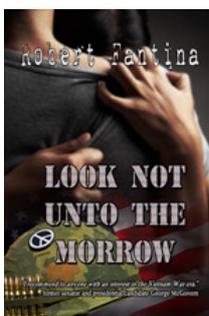
Tags   Iraq   Syria

Movie Memorabilia.

Innocence shattered and ultimate redemption are portrayed against the backdrop of the Vietnam War and the turbulent sixties.

SIGN UP FAST HERE

Email: *

Subscribe

Maintained by a union shop at MayFirst.org