

# Why You Should Care

## **Global Corporate Government dependent on perennial war to enforce its inequality is unacceptable.**

Free trade rules where money is power, forced on the peoples of the world by military might or diplomatic manipulation, will only ensure increasing inequality and environmental destruction. Peace will never come to the planet until humans can create a world where social and economic justice provide a secure and fulfilling life for all people within the limits of the planet we live on.

**Pre-emptive, unilateral war is not the American Way.** Military incursions to access resources and markets and to force US businesses on cultures around the world is destroying respect for and dissolving belief in American ideals. The Pew Global Attitudes Project points out that favorable international opinions about the United States have fallen 50% or more since the inception of the War on Iraq.

**Death and destruction caused by war is an abomination.** Millions of innocent deaths in wars of American conquest carried out over the past 200 years cripple our cultural soul. The massive destruction promulgated by our increasingly sophisticated weaponry saps the world's creative energy and destroys the heritage of our forbearers

**Funding the American war machine is bankrupting our economy.** With a military ten times the size of its closest rival and as big as all the rest of the world's armies, the US army is far bigger than it needs to be. With a budget that takes up half the federal budget, discretionary spending on military items is eight times larger than education or health. Monthly expenditures on war in Iraq and Afghanistan have risen from \$4.7 billion a month to an estimated \$8 billion a month. Nobel Laureate economist Joseph Stiglitz and Linda Bilmes make a moderate estimate that the costs of these wars is \$2.2 trillion. Cutting taxes while increasing costs will lead to massive borrowing, skyrocketing interest and what economist Max Sawicky calls an economic train wreck.

**Militarization of US society and corruption of US politics is turning our nation into a military state.** The political convention of the ruling Republican party in 2004 was a veritable pep rally for the US military. Though defense leaders denied the plausibility of a military coup in the US, in a Harpers Magazine Forum they admit that they have already taken over. From violent video games to gratuitous glorification of the military and its inherent violence in the media, our American cultural commons are being corrupted by the militarization of our society.



# What You Can Do



Should the United States Bring the Troops Home Now?

Yes  No



**Refuse to participate in the war machine.** Join millions who refuse to pay taxes, or go to war. (see the **War Resisters League** website [warresisters.org](http://warresisters.org)). Also refuse to participate or support businesses involved in the war economy (see [boycottbush.org](http://boycottbush.org)). Get prepared for a long nonviolent struggle by reading Gene Sharp's research at [www.aeinstein.org](http://www.aeinstein.org).

**Pass a local resolution against war.** Organize your local community or join an existing organization. See [unitedforpeace.org](http://unitedforpeace.org) for a list of organizations in your state. See [Cities for Peace](http://CitiesforPeace.org) for a toolkit on gathering support, surveying local officials, gathering signatures, identifying political allies, holding public events and outreach to the media.

**Work to create a Department of Peace (DOP).** Participate in an historic citizen lobbying effort to create a US Department of Peace. Support House Resolution 3760 and Senate Resolution 1756. The DOP will augment problem-solving modalities, providing practical, nonviolent solutions to domestic and international conflict (see [www.thepeacealliance.org](http://www.thepeacealliance.org)).

**Vote out politicians supporting war.** Sign the voters pledge at [votersforpeace.org](http://votersforpeace.org)

**Research and advertise** local political connections between local politicians and the corporate war machine. Search the **Center for Responsive Politics** website [opensecrets.org](http://opensecrets.org) for information on campaign contributions to your local senator or congressman. Find out how much defense industry support they have and who their biggest supporters are.

**Create Street Theater.** Move on to the streets and make a public showing. Check out **Code Pink** resource tool kit at [codepink4peace.org](http://codepink4peace.org) to start a group, download songs and chants, drop a banner, deal with the media, etc.



**Produce or show media** about the impacts of militarization on society. Interview veterans returned from war or administrators dealing with violence in our society or people dependent on the military budget. Show movies including *Iraq for Sale* and *Why We Fight*.

**Begin the long struggle** to create a movement to take back our democracy from the corporate warlords. Use the WILPF and UFE study guides (see page 9) to begin the process of educating yourself and your community about the corporate connections to war.