



MARCH FORWARD!
VETERANS AND SERVICE MEMBERS STAND UP AGAINST WAR AND RACISM

**IRAQ VETERANS
AGAINST THE WAR**



The imperial wars rage on. U.S. drones rain missiles down on innocents in Pakistan; hundreds of children die daily in Afghanistan because of the war; contrary to what the President says, the occupation in Iraq continues. The devastation and misery caused by the U.S. invasion of Iraq has not even begun to be addressed. The United States, rather than bringing democracy and freedom to the Iraqi people, has destroyed their country—perhaps beyond repair.

On March 19, 2011, a broad coalition of U.S. military veterans consisting of members of Iraq Veterans Against the War, March Forward!, Vietnam Veterans Against the War and Veterans For Peace will gather at the White House in solidarity to demand peace. The veteran-led action will be supported by a large array of activist groups including ANSWER, Fellowship of Reconciliation, CODEPINK, Voters for Peace, United for Peace and Justice, World Can't Wait, Peace Action, and the War Resisters League.

Veterans will gather to support Bradley Manning, who should be venerated as a hero instead of being incarcerated under conditions amounting, literally (and legally) to torture. We call for an immediate end to the cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment of PFC Bradley Manning during his military confinement.

Records and videos allegedly downloaded by Manning revealed horrendous war crimes committed by U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, widespread torture by Iraqi authorities with full knowledge of the U.S. military, previously unknown estimates of the number of Iraqi civilians killed at U.S. military checkpoints, and the massive Iraqi civilian death toll caused by the U.S. invasion.

As veterans, we well understand and cherish the obligation of military personnel to refuse illegal orders and beyond that to prevent and expose war crimes. We know there is no excuse for following, either actively or passively, illegal orders.

We understand the need for justice. Our demand is clear, straightforward, and undeniable. Bring to justice those who committed war crimes, not those who report them—who heroically refuse to be a part of state-inspired mayhem and murder.

Veterans and others will gather en masse at the White House as we did on December 16, 2010, and again refuse to move. We have three clear demands for the President. End these wars and occupations. Expose the Lies. Free Bradley Manning.

"The speeches were over. There was a mournful harmonica rendition of taps. The 500 protesters fell silent. One hundred

and thirty-one men and women, many of them military veterans wearing old fatigues, formed a single, silent line. Under a heavy snowfall and to the slow beat of a drum, they walked to the White House fence. They stood there until they were arrested.”—Chris Hedges

“We have become a killer nation and our economy is addicted to endless war spending. The Congress

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and the White House have been taken over by the corporate oligarchy and they have drowned democracy.”—Bruce Gagnon

America’s corporate rulers understand that their power depends upon a subdued, sedated and manipulated public—a public fed lies and fanta-

sies that can, when needed, be manipulated by fear or coercion. But as the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt show us, the people can triumph over entrenched power, lies, fear, and coercion.

Forty-four years ago at Riverside Church in New York City Martin Luther King said, *“Our only hope today lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go out into a sometimes hostile world declaring eternal hostility to poverty, racism, and militarism.”*

On March 19—the anniversary of the brutal invasion of Iraq, where over a million Iraqis and almost 5,000 U.S. soldiers died with thousands more grievously injured—as the occupation of Iraq and the wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan continue unabated, Iraq Veterans Against the War, Vietnam Veterans Against the War, March Forward! and Veterans For Peace will bring the largest ever veteran-led nonviolent public civil resistance to the White House.

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