

No More War!

Celebrities Address Anti-War Gatherers at Washington, D.C. Rally – October 26, 2002.

CYNTHIA MCKINNEY, Congresswoman

Thank you for being here today. We know that when good men do nothing – evil triumphs. Evil is all around us today – in every corner of the world. And sadly, even our own country is not the same as it used to be. The good ol' days are gone, but the bad ol' boys remain.

The *USA Patriot Act* and the *Secret Evidence Act* erode our constitutional rights. Hard-earned savings of generations of Americans are being spent on the military and intelligence communities, while poverty and homelessness affect millions in every city and town in America.

Now this Administration proposes to take this country to war against Iraq. Yet, all across our country and those of our allies, veterans of the last war against Iraq still suffer the health effects of Gulf War Syndrome. Our Vietnam era veterans still suffer from exposure to Agent Orange, while a new generation of veterans is reeling from depleted uranium.

Our government can monitor our cell phones, the keystrokes on our computer keyboards, the books we read at the library, but they can't give a warm meal and shelter to the veterans who have served our country and who are now in need. Something is terribly, terribly wrong. We slid into the Vietnam War with a *Gulf of Tonkin Resolution* that turned out not to be true.

Against today's backdrop of Washington DC, the most powerful capital city on the planet, I dream of the day when the power of love replaces the power of might. That will be the day when our world will know the blessings of peace and our Republic will be in the hands of the people.

SUSAN SARANDON, Actress

I am here today as a mother who is frightened for my children, frightened for your children, and frightened for the children of Iraq. I know that violence escalates violence, that terrorism has never successfully been fought this way.

I am here to ask questions that have not been answered. How will the bombing of Baghdad, a city of 5 million, accomplish a regime change? How much will that bombing cost in lives and in money? How much will it cost us to maintain stability in that region? And for how long? And what about the relationship with our allies? What about our relationship with the UN? I am here because I am tired of being frightened to speak out!

We have been told that, "You are either with us or against us". That to ask a question is anti-American. Mr. Bush you have hijacked our pain, our loss, our fear, and you have convinced many that to fight pre-emptively is the only way to protect our democracy. I say to you Mr. Bush, [take a look around] ... "This is what democracy looks like!"

Our resistance to this war should be our resistance to profit at the cost of human life. Because that is what these drums over Iraq are really all about. This is about business, the business of distracting American attention from Enron and Haliburton. In the name of fear and fighting terror we are giving the reigns of power to oilmen ... oilmen more interested in a financial bottom line than a moral bottom line ... oilmen ready to expand their influence with new contracts on the soil our bombers have flattened. The majority in America knows this. A dormant majority in America waits with anticipation for the politician that will stand in front of

the American people in defiance of the oil companies and advocate alternative energy as a way to extricate ourselves from this culture of violence that threatens our future.

Let us resist this war and our impending oil war in Columbia. Let us hate war in all its forms whether its weapon is a US missile or its weapon is a domestic aeroplane. Dialogue is the opposite of war. Dialogue makes peace possible. We are here today, in dialogue, to ask for a solution that comes from a place that values human life, that respects the rights of people everywhere. We are here to take democracy back!

RAMSEY CLARK, Former US Attorney General

Every day in a dozen ways you hear President Bush, Vice President Cheney, Secretary of State Powell, Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld and, above all, the mighty voice of the media saying, "War Now"... "We've got to destroy Iraq". Who have you heard say anything about our responsibility and our accountability for the three wars we've already destroyed Iraq with? In 1991, [we flew] 110,000 aerial sorties in 42 days – 88,500 tons of bombs, 150,000 dead. The Pentagon said we lost 155, more than one third to friendly fire, the rest to accidents, no combat casualties. It was a slaughter. You don't slaughter with impunity. This is a war crime. This is a crime against humanity.

This day, we oppose the unbelievable sanctions on Iraq. They have killed more than a million and a half people and every day we've known it. Who's talking about that now? Where is US accountability for that? We've bombed the sovereign territory of Iraq every day since 1991. And we claim *they* are evil!

We'd better pay attention. We are destroying international law which has the potential for peace. We are destroying the United Nations which was created to end the scourge of war. We are thumbing our nose at the Nuremberg Charter which if it stood for anything it's: "You cannot strike first!" And that is what we plan to do with Iraq and other countries. After Iraq, it will be more. If we don't stop this now, we'll find that we'll live in chaos for the rest of our lives and God only knows what will happen to the next generation. These are criminal offences. They are indictable offences, and they are impeachable offences. An attack on Iraq will be genocide ... again. It has to be prevented. Regime change needs to begin *at home*.

We need to liberate the United States from "militarism", for God's sake. Don't you see what we are doing? Who has the weapons of mass destruction? We do. Who is spending more money every day for more weapons? We do.

We've got to liberate this country from corporate oligarchy. They control our lives. This is not a democracy. It's a plutocracy. The people don't rule here. Wealth rules. The corporations rule. They rule the Congress. They elect the President. They run the Pentagon. They own the media.

We've got to liberate the United States from repression. We've got two million people in prison for God's sake! Don't we know? We execute more than one person a week in this country! So let's liberate the United States of America. Let's make it stand for decency everywhere. Let's move to end poverty and hunger and sickness and ignorance and have jobs for everybody, everywhere. Let's work productively. Let's reach out in friendship and love all over the world. No more war! ■