On October 6, Make a Clamor for Peace

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Dear Dick,

Mark Your Calendar

On October 6, take part in a nation-wide call for peace by:

1. Calling Congress to tell them to end the wars
2. Attending a demonstration or vigil
3. Spreading the word about our "Countdown to Drawdown"

On October 7, 2011, the United States will have been at war for ten years. Let's mark the anniversary by making a clamor for peace so loud that Congress, the president, and big media will have to pay attention.

The press has to cover the anniversary. But if past experience is any guide, major media will use the occasion to say that with unemployment high and "the wars winding down," America has lost interest.

Let's defeat that narrative by raising a clamor for peace on October 6.

1. Mark your calendar to call Congress on October 6. Seventy Members of the House have urged the Supercommittee charged with reducing government debt to end the wars. The debate about future government spending is a historic opportunity to talk about the Pentagon's plans for war. [1] We'll be asking you to call Congress on October 6 to support the demand that the Supercommittee end the wars. Mark your calendar now.
2. On October 6, attend a demonstration or vigil demanding peace. On October 6, peace advocates across America will be demanding an end to the wars. Actions are being organized around the country. If there is no action in your community, organize one and tell us about it; we'll send the information to Just Foreign Policy members in your area. One list of actions in formation is here: http://occupytogether.org/
3. Spread the word about our "Countdown to Drawdown." Many Americans are under the impression that U.S. troops will be gone from Afghanistan by January 1, 2015. But the
Pentagon is quietly planning on keeping the war going until at least 2024. Next week, we will unveil a new campaign to bring about a real deadline for the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Afghanistan. Watch for it!

Everyone can't do everything; everyone won't do everything. But everyone can take at least one public action for peace on October 6. Mark your calendar now!

Thanks for all you do to help bring about a more just foreign policy,
Megan Iorio, Sarah Burns, Chelsea Mozen and Robert Naiman
Just Foreign Policy

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References:

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War No More:
Sojourners SojoMail@sojo.net via uark.edu to jbennet
Watch the Video [sorry the link doesn't work; I wrote to Sojourners]

Dear Dick,
Next Friday, October 7, 2011, marks 10 years since the United States invaded Afghanistan in the name of the “War on Terror.” Sadly, this summer President Obama announced he’ll continue our military presence in the country until 2014, and Congress has agreed to follow his lead.

Where do we go from here?

We've put together a short video based on Isaiah 2:4, which reads:
"He will judge between the nations
and will settle disputes for many peoples.
They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war any more."
Watch the video. Pray for peace. And then share this message far and wide. You can start by emailing Congress.
Sojourners and its members have spoken out against the war since the very beginning -- speeches, protests, press conferences, letters -- and we'll continue to do so until it is ended. Approaching this unbelievable anniversary, we come together to mourn, pray, and recommit ourselves to bring this war to an end.

We hope the video is useful to you for reflecting on where we find ourselves at this point in history and as a tool to start conversations with your church, your friends, and even your
family.

For peace,
Duane, Heather, Carrie, Elizabeth, James, and the team at Sojourners

RSN: Reader Supported News, Sept. 7, 2011
JP Sottile writes, "Ryan Crocker has spoken. The 'career diplomat' and former Ambassador to Iraq, meaning de facto 'provincial governor,' told Reuters that the US will need to stay in Afghanistan to prevent another 9/11.... the 9/11-10th Anniversary Media Feeding Frenzy is upon us, and Fear, Inc. is about to reacquaint us with those tried and true justifications for a vast and costly empire."
READ MORE  http://www.readersupportednews.org/opinion2/268-35/7342-obama-afghanistan-policy-its-a-crocker

“How McChrystal and Petraeus Built an Indiscriminate ‘Killing Machine’”
Gareth Porter, Truthout, Sept. 26, 2011
Even if the rest of the US military effort in Afghanistan has been largely written off by the news media as a failure, the campaign of targeted raids against insurgents by commandoes under the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) has gotten a reputation for devastating effectiveness."

Rahma Muhammad Mian. “Remote-Controlled Reporting on Remote-Controlled War.” Extra! (October 2011). Obama increased drone attacks in Pakistan—in his first year in office “more attacks than in eight years under George W. Bush.” But “there has been no comparable increase in attention to the program by U.S. corporate media.”

*Action: Urge Your Rep. to Co-sponsor the Iraq Accountability Act
The Administration is trying to keep thousands of U.S. troops in Iraq indefinitely. Bipartisan legislation would prohibit this. Urge your Rep to co-sponsor.
http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/act/obamaextendsbushwar
Current list of co-sponsors:
http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d112:HR02757:@@@P

Jobs Plan? End the Wars, Save 400,000 Jobs
Here's how the President can save more than 400,000 jobs without spending a dime: bring
home the troops from Iraq and Afghanistan as scheduled, instead of cutting Social Security and Medicare benefits.

*Action: Tell Congress: $200 Billion In "Real Savings" If We End the Wars "On Time"
Many Americans don't realize that the Super Committee can reach 1/6 of its debt reduction goal just by withdrawing U.S. troops from Iraq and Afghanistan when we said we were going to. Urge your representatives in Congress to make this part of any debt reduction deal.
http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/act/endwarsontime

“Afghanistan: A History of Failed Press Coverage”
Paul Fitzgerald and Elizabeth Gould, Nieman Watchdog, October 27, 2009
Intro: "For decades, the American news media by and large have been simplistic and misleading in reporting US relations toward Afghanistan, write Paul Fitzgerald and Elizabeth Gould. From 1981 on, they say, the press has kept vital information away from the American people."

“America's Costly War Machine “
Linda J. Bilmes and Joseph E. Stiglitz, Los Angeles Times September 18, 2011, RSN
Intro: "Fighting the war on terror compromises the economy now and threatens it in the future."
READ MORE   http://readersupportednews.org/opinion2/266-32/7478-americas-costly-war-machine

DoD Leaving Millions Behind In Iraq, Afghanistan
Carlo Munoz, AOL, October 1, 2011, RSN
Excerpt: "The inability to keep track of these contracts is due to 'the lack of advance planning, workforce shortfalls, and contractor accounting challenges' of the part of the DoD expeditionary contracting corps, according to the report. For example, there is nothing in the department's rulebook on wartime contracting that requires DoD to review and close out reconstruction deals in a timely manner. As a result, these deals are left essentially open-ended, with no way of knowing how many millions DoD is leaving on the table in Iraq and Afghanistan."
Afghan Women Artists and Activists Featured During Decade of War Awareness Month

According to a recent article on the CineSource film site, "An art renaissance is blooming in Afghanistan." In the midst of the ongoing U.S. occupation and a daily life that is marked by violence from years of wars waged by foreign armies and civil wars fueled by the occupiers, Afghan artists continue to make their work.

Some of that artwork has reached international audiences and War Resisters League is honored to present a few of those pieces to our members and supporters at the War Voices forum on Oct. 7, 2011 in Washington D.C., 10 years after the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan.

As a part of the War Voices art show that will feature work from Afghan and Afghan-American artists and filmmakers, anti-war veteran artists, and other anti-war artists, we will focus on Afghan women's contributions and leadership in the art and filmmaking that is coming out of their country.

We will feature films from the Women’s Voices from the Muslim World: A Short-Film Festival, which includes 32 submissions from Afghanistan. Two of the films that we will be showing, "Half Value Life" and "We Are Postmodern" are by Afghan filmmaker Alka Sadat. You can read the CineSource interview with Sadat here.

"When Afghan people sit together, even if they don't want to speak about political things, they automatically speak. We are in a situation [where] we should speak about this. Everyone has a different idea. We have to speak about this." --Alka Sadat

We will also be featuring a panel discussion on the war with Afghans for Peace members Fatima Mojaddidy and Suraia Suhar. Afghans for Peace is a group of Afghan-Americans and Afghan-Canadians organizing against the U.S. and NATO occupation of Afghanistan.

One key Afghans for Peace supporter, Rangina Hamidi, has worked since 2003 on a project that employs women from Kandahar province, a central site of the occupation since 2010 with 30,000 U.S. troops on the ground, to create uniquely embroidered tapestries and garmets for local and global marketplaces. The project, Kandahar Treasure, builds a solid economic base for the women working there while creating a venue for the world to see the beautiful embroidery work, called Khamak (pronounced kha-mahk), created by women in southern Afghanistan.

"The women want the world to know that they are active in their way of pursuing peace and stability...because they have never been an active part of the wars in the last 30+ years, they want to now be the active agents in calling for peace." --Rangina Hamidi on Democracy Now

Please contact Kimber@warresisters.org if you would like find out more about the War Voices forum on October 7 in Washington D.C.

END OF NEWSLETTER #13 ON AFGHAN/PAKISTAN WAR