

## For Immediate Release

Veterans For Peace: [www.veteransforpeace.org](http://www.veteransforpeace.org)

NEWS ADVISORY  
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### Veterans For Peace Answer Critics of Memorials and Vigils

**Who:** Veterans For Peace, a national organization of military veterans including men and women from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, the Iraq War, other conflicts and “peacetime.”

**What:** Address critics of Vigils and Memorials held by members and chapters of Veterans For Peace

Vigils and Arlington Memorials are important and effective initiatives by local Veterans For Peace chapters. These memorials are conducted to make the consequences of war real and to allow people to express their grief, respect and thoughts. As a result of the power of these memorials and stance against war, Veterans For Peace has come under attack from some quarters, mostly by people who support the war in Iraq.

A number of Gold Star Families have accused Veterans For Peace of using the names of the Fallen to deliberately cause pain and suffering. The President of Veterans For Peace David Cline says, "When a few of the Fallen's families began to contact us, our national board discussed it and set a policy including the family's wishes. We have told our chapters that if Fallen family members objects to a name being used in one of our memorials or vigils, the name should be removed. Our purpose is not to cause grief to parents or spouses of dead soldiers."

Veterans For Peace does not concede the right to use the names of the Fallen. Executive Director Michael McPhearson stated, "When a service member dies the whole nation mourns. Our organization conducts memorials and vigils to honor the dead and remind the living of the cost of war. Our belief that the Bush administration has sent our service members to fight an illegal war does not diminish our respect or honor for those who fight and have fallen. However, some Gold Star Family members have asked us to discontinue the use of their loved one's name. Our policy reflects their input."

Veterans For Peace is a national organization founded in 1985. It is structured around a national office in Saint Louis, MO and comprised of members across the country organized in chapters or as at-large members. The organization includes men and women veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, Iraq war other, conflicts and peacetime veterans.

Our collective experience tells us wars are easy to start and hard to stop and that those hurt are often the innocent. Thus, other means of problem solving are necessary.

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