

PRESS RELEASE / NEWS ADVISORY March 19, 2005

Veterans For Peace Call for Congressional Action to Remove George W. Bush from the Office of President of the United States

St. Louis, MO - A national veterans' organization today called for the removal of President Bush and Vice-President Cheney for crimes committed during the invasion and occupation of Iraq.

In a letter sent to each member of the U.S. House and Senate, Veterans For Peace (VFP) stated that "this administration's war on Iraq, in addition to being increasingly unpopular among Americans, is an unmistakable violation of our Constitution and federal law which you have sworn to uphold. In our system, the remedy for such high crimes is clear: this administration must be impeached."

David Cline, a decorated Vietnam War combat veteran and VFP President, said, "We do not make this call lightly and as former members of the U.S. armed forces, we take our responsibilities as citizens very seriously. For that reason we believe that when our government conducts a war of aggression on Iraq and commits a growing and appalling series of what must legally be considered war crimes and crimes against humanity in the execution of that war, it violates Article VI of the U.S. Constitution, the War Crimes Act of 1996 (18 U.S.C. § 2441), and numerous international treaties which are legally binding on our nation."

Cline added that, "We are not the first group to call for impeachment. We have decided to add our voice to the call. All the reasons given for the invasion have shown themselves to be half-truths or misleading. The conflict continues to drag on taking the lives of our soldiers and innocent Iraqis. It is clear that George Bush does not intend to change course in an effort to right this great wrong. He has had enough time in his second term to begin a shift and he has not. It is time to remove him from office."

Veterans For Peace is seeking individual and organizational supporters to work jointly on the effort to impeach the president.

Veterans For Peace was founded in 1985 with a national office in Saint Louis, MO, and is organized in chapters across the country. The organization includes men and women veterans from all eras, as well as associate members.

Iraq War Merits Impeachment

The letter below was sent to each member of the U.S. Congress on March 19, 2005, the second anniversary of the invasion of Iraq.



VETERANS FOR PEACE, INC.

NATIONAL OFFICE: 216 S. Meramec Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63105
PHONE: (314) 725-7103 FAX: (314) 725-7103 E-MAIL: vfp@igc.org

March 19, 2005

Dear Member of Congress,

On the second anniversary of the invasion and occupation of Iraq, this letter is being sent on behalf of Veterans For Peace (VFP), a national organization of military veterans, to appeal for Congressional action to remove George W. Bush and Richard Cheney from the offices of President and Vice-President of the United States, respectively.

We do not make this call lightly and as former members of the U.S. armed forces, we take our responsibilities as citizens very seriously. For that reason we believe that when our government conducts a war of aggression on Iraq and commits a growing and appalling series of what must legally be considered war crimes and crimes against humanity in the execution of that war, it violates Article VI of the U.S. Constitution, the War Crimes Act of 1996 (18 U.S.C. § 2441), and numerous international treaties which are legally binding on our nation.

Seeing this happen, and understanding all too well the suffering it is causing and will continue to cause among our soldiers, their families, the people of Iraq, and the fabric of both our societies, we cannot stand by in complicit silence.

If you will read the relevant sections of the Nuremberg Principles, the Geneva Conventions, and the other treaties this administration has violated (see attached), you will be left with only one conclusion: that this administration's war on Iraq, in addition to being increasingly unpopular among Americans, is an unmistakable violation of our Constitution and federal law which you have sworn to uphold.

In our system, the remedy for such high crimes is clear: this administration must be impeached. We urge you as sincerely and solemnly as possible, to begin impeachment proceedings against President Bush and Vice-President Cheney in the House of Representatives and follow that with a trial in the Senate. In the name of humanity we beseech and direct you to act.

Most Urgently,

David Cline, President

1985 - 2005: Twenty Years of Waging Peace

www.veteransforpeace.org

Laws violated by President George W. Bush, Vice-President Richard Cheney, public officials under their authority, and members of the U.S. military under their command, sufficient for impeachment

- **The U. S. Constitution, Art. VI, para. 2**, makes treaties adopted by the U.S. part of the "law of the land." Thus, a violation of the U. N. Charter, Hague IV, Geneva Conventions, etc. is also a violation of U.S. federal law.
- **U.S. Federal Law 18 U.S.C. § 2441** (War Crimes Act of 1996) makes committing a war crime, defined as: "...a grave breach in any of the international conventions signed at Geneva 12 August 1949, or any protocol to such convention to which the United States is a party..." punishable by fine, imprisonment, or death.
- **The following treaties and charters which define wars of aggression, war crimes, crimes against peace and crimes against humanity:**



Laws and Customs of War on Land (Hague IV)

Art. 55. The occupying State shall be regarded only as administrator...of public buildings, real estate, forests, and agricultural estates belonging to the hostile State, and situated in the occupied country. It must safeguard the capital of these properties, and administer them in accordance with the rules of usufruct.

U.N. Gen. Assembly Res. 3314

Defines the crime of aggression as "... the use of armed force by a State against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of another State...or in any other manner inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations..."

Nuremberg Tribunal Charter

Principle VI: "The crimes hereinafter set out are punishable as crimes under international law:

- (a) Crimes against peace: Planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression or a war in violation of international treaties;
- (b) War crimes: ...murder, ill-treatment...of civilian population of or in occupied territory; murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war,...plunder of public or private property, wanton destruction of cities, towns, or villages...
- (c) Crimes against humanity: Murder, extermination...and other inhuman acts done against any



Abu Ghraib Prison Abuses

civilian population...when such acts are done...in execution of or in connection with any crime against peace or any war crime."



Geneva Conventions

- A)** Protocol I, Article 75: "(1)...persons who are in the power of a Party to the conflict...shall be treated humanely in all circumstances...(2) The following acts are and shall remain prohibited...whether committed by civilian or by military agents: (a) violence to the life, health, or physical or mental well-being of persons...(b) outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment, enforced prostitution and any form of indecent assault...and threats to commit any of the foregoing acts."
- B)** Protocol I, Art. 51: "The civilian population...shall not be the object of attack. Acts or threats of violence the primary purpose of which is to spread terror among the civilian population are prohibited." Art. 57: (parties shall) "do everything feasible to verify that the objectives to be attacked are neither civilians nor civilian objects...an attack shall be cancelled or suspended if it becomes apparent that the objective is not a military one..."
- C)** Protocol I, Art. 70: "The Parties to the conflict...shall allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of all relief consignments, equipment and personnel...even if such assistance is destined for the civilian population of the adverse Party."
- D)** Protocol I, Art. 35: "In any armed conflict, the right of the Parties...to choose methods or means of warfare is not unlimited...It is prohibited to employ methods or means of warfare which are intended, or may be expected, to cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the environment."
- E)** Convention I, Art. 3: "Persons taking no active part in the hostilities, including members of armed forces who have laid down their arms... shall in all circumstances be treated humanely...To this end, the following acts (in addition to those listed in Art. 75, above) are and shall remain prohibited:...the passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples."
- F)** Convention III, Art. 5: "Should any doubt arise as to whether persons, having committed a belligerent act and having fallen into the hands of the enemy (are prisoners of war under this Convention), such persons shall enjoy the protection of the present Convention until such time as their status has been determined by a competent tribunal."
- G)** Convention IV, Art. 33: "No protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or of terrorism are prohibited."

To read documentation for these charges, go to
<http://www.veteransforpeace.org/impeachment/impeachment.htm>