

Chelsea Stands Up Against the War!

2/17/09

(Standup Week 197)

Tuesday, 6pm–7pm

Why are we in Iraq?

Not because of weapons of mass destruction.

Not because Iraq was involved in 9/11.

Not because Iraq was a threat to our national security.

What have we gotten?

US military dead: 4,245 US military wounded: 31,035

Iraqi civilians killed: 98,992 * Money spent on war: \$600 billion

Who are we?

Chelsea Neighbors United to End the War has pledged to “Stand Up” until the war ends and the troops come home safely.

Every Tuesday evening at 6 pm (rain or shine), **Chelsea Neighbors United to End the War** assembles on the northwest corner of 8th Avenue and 24th Street to facilitate “**Chelsea Stands Up Against the War,**” a community protest against the war in Iraq.

We carry banners, signs, and candles as we gather for one hour each week to protest the war in Iraq. We distribute this newsletter, peace buttons, collect signatures on petitions and speak with our neighbors about the need to end war in Iraq. The **Stand Up** make a dramatic statement to passing vehicular traffic on 8th avenue.

Chelsea Neighbors United to End the War is an all-volunteer organization that wants to build the broadest possible neighborhood consensus. With that goal in mind, the organization is open to all and functions by consensus.

Chelsea Neighbors United to End the War is not formally affiliated with any other organization but is willing to work with all groups and individuals who are committed to ending this illegal and immoral war fought by our fellow citizens, paid for with our tax dollars, and prosecuted in our name.

*The recent Johns Hopkins/Lancet report places the figure at 655,000+



Chelsea Neighbors United to End the War

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They Volunteered After All

By Carla Nordstrom

A woman who stops by the Stand-Up periodically keeps us posted on news about her niece who is serving in Iraq. During her deployment this young single mother with a home in Texas is relying on her parents in the Bronx to care for her four year old daughter. This situation troubles me so I mentioned it to a neighbor who is in the Army Reserves and has served in Afghanistan. My neighbor's response was, “What do you expect, she volunteered to serve.”

The military is not only sending single mothers of young children into harm's way, it is also sending soldiers back to Iraq who have been deployed multiple times and are seeking treatment for depression. Suicide is at a record high in the U.S. military. Twenty-four soldiers killed themselves during this past January.

When asked about the January suicide rate, chief psychologist, Col. Kathy Platoni responded, “There is more hopelessness and helplessness because everything is so dreary and cold.” (<http://www.cnn.com/2009/US/02/05/army.suicides/index.html>) She went on to attribute the spike to a number of factors including multiple deployments, stigma associated with seeking mental health treatment, and high usage of antidepressants that bring on suicidal thoughts in 3 out of 4 people that take them.

We should all be asking ourselves why the military is sending single moms of young children to Iraq, why soldiers are killing themselves, and why there are multiple deployments. Like my neighbor, does the military assume that because soldiers volunteered for duty it is absolved of responsibility for the bad decisions? There is one clear way to stop this madness: end the wars now!



Photo by Gary Scholchet