

## Why I am a 'Terrorist'

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According to the twisted logic recently espoused by Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, the failure to support illegal, immoral and unnecessary wars defines one as a terrorist. Let me be clear about where I stand: I know who the real terrorists are, and can name each one of them—Rumsfeld among the rest.

Everywhere you go in America you see the slogan, "Support our troops." You see it on bumper stickers, storefronts, flags and banners, yellow ribbons and even in the windows of private homes. But what does it mean to support our troops? Is it to send them into harm's way; to invade and occupy sovereign nations in illegal wars for empire? Is it to ask them to commit heinous crimes, to maim and to kill innocent civilians; to torture, insult, and to humiliate people who have done us no harm? Is it to steal the natural wealth that belongs to other nations and turn it over to American corporations?

If that is what it means, then I cannot support our troops. I cannot wish them well if their purpose is conquer other people, and plunder the wealth of other countries that have done us no harm. That would require me to endorse crimes against humanity conducted under the guise of national security and patriotism. I cannot do that—I will not. It is simply wrong.

Neither should we, as we so often do, confuse supporting our troops with supporting the president, or wrongful and immoral policies of corrupt government. The president and his ilk do not support our troops or he would not use them as pawns; he would take care of them when they come home broken and torn with psychic scars. He does not care about them—they are only a means to an end.

No, the best way to support our troops is to take a principled stand; to hold the moral high ground—to bring them home alive and whole. A government must not be allowed to require any of its citizens to engage in immoral or criminal behavior on its behalf. When a government behaves like a crime syndicate it does not mean that the people should follow its example—they must provide a better alternative, and refuse their allegiance to it.

So if the failure to support a government's wrongful policies makes me a terrorist—so be it. If speaking truth to power makes one a terrorist—sign me up; move me to top of the NSA and FBI lists of suspects. Send forth the assassins with their rifles. If exposing the lies and corruption that attends power makes me a terrorist—I will proudly wear the crown and bear the cost. I will cheerfully take my place alongside other terrorists with names like Thoreau, Debs, King, Gandhi, Einstein, Zinn, and Christ.

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