

[Note: I sent this letter to several corporate media outlets in the 6th District: not one chose to print it.]

To The Editor:

As I write, today is the sixth Memorial Day since our Congressman, Norm Dicks, confronted with his “Gulf of Tonkin” moment, voted to give George Bush a blank check to wage war on Iraq. According to the British medical journal, Lancet, more than one million Iraqis are dead. 4,081 U. S. soldiers are dead; 30,000 injured; thousands of veterans commit suicide every month.

On this Memorial Day we have heard politicians mouth speeches about brave men who gave their lives for the United States. But as Garrison Keillor pointed out a few days ago, “many lives were not given, they were taken, and taken stupidly and carelessly. And there has been great public piety about those men and their ‘sacrifice’ on the part of politicians who blithely sacrificed them.” Politicians like Norm Dicks, Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney, who were too busy to serve in the military during the Vietnam Era, seemingly oblivious to the consequences of their actions, blithely sent other people’s children off to die in a preemptive war.

Dicks told me several years ago that he would have voted against the authorization, “if I knew then what I know now.” But he should have known. After forty-three years in Washington, D. C. Norm Dicks should have known that presidents and vice-presidents lie, secretaries of state lie, secretaries of defense lie, national security advisors lie. But Mr. Dicks did not use good judgment; he voted grandly, gloriously, and catastrophically wrong. He has continued to compound that catastrophic vote by voting for every war funding measure since. Add those terrible decisions to his votes for both of the Patriot acts, the Military Commissions Act that stripped *habeas corpus* from the Constitution and the Homegrown Terrorism Act and we see an elected official who has set the United States on a course to moral and financial bankruptcy.

We may see Norm Dicks move away from his previous positions with some urgency as November nears. Don’t be fooled. Look at the alternatives - - people who, like me, have served in the military and had the judgment and experience to oppose this war and occupation from the beginning.

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