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**Ask Not What...  
By Cindy Sheehan  
BlackCommentator.com Guest Commentator**

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*There is no challenge greater than the defense of our nation and our values. The men and women of our military - have signed up at a time when our troops face an ever-increasing load. Fighting a resurgent Taliban. Targeting al Qaeda. Persevering in the deserts and cities of Iraq. Training foreign militaries. Delivering humanitarian relief. In this young century, our military has answered when called, even as that call has come too often. Through their commitment, their capability, and their courage they have done us all proud.*

*But we need to ease the burden on our troops, while meeting the challenges of the 21st century. That's why I will call on a new generation of Americans to join our military, and complete the effort to increase our ground forces by 65,000 soldiers and 27,000 Marines.*

The above excerpt is from a speech that the "peace" candidate, Barack Obama gave in Colorado on the 2nd of July. To be sure, he also called for other service to our country but I feel these two paragraphs highlight the continuing subservience the so-called public servants of the USA have to War, Inc.

The only reason that our military is under such a great "burden" is because politicians like Barack Obama have voted consistently for billions (some award winning economists estimate, trillions) of wasted dollars to continue BushCo's abominable occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. Instead of increasing the Pentagon's already bloated budget, a true peace candidate would be calling for immediate withdrawal of forces from these countries so our military can begin the healing processes that need to occur to rejuvenate our broken military so we can have a true defense force and not an imperialistic ready response team to be on constant alert to storm any country at the whim of the emperor to spread corporate imperialism (what politicians call: Democracy) at the end of an M-16 or bombs bursting in air.

President John F. Kennedy, whom Obama is trying to emulate by calling for increased service to the USA, famously said in his first and only inaugural address:

*Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.*

President Kennedy also said, less famously, in that same address:

*The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life.*

Since President Kennedy uttered those words almost 50 years ago, the USA has become very adept at ending all forms of human life and has also, unfortunately, become experts at increasing human poverty and all this is because we have not heeded Kennedy's predecessor, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower when he warned the nation of the military industrial complex which has expanded over the years into the Military Industrial Congressional Media Complex.

I would like to enhance Kennedy's famous words on this 4th of July when the country sets off on another celebration of gross militarism and the deaths of millions of people while we never pay tribute to our First Nation peoples who were exterminated so white Europeans could despoil a beautiful land. My new proposal for the 21st C. is:

*Ask not what humanity can do for you, but what you can do for humanity.*

A great beginning for the new surge of taking care of individuals instead of taking care of the pigs of War, Inc, would be to start withdrawing our troops from Iraq and Afghanistan and don't forget to pull out the independent contracting companies and oil companies who through their No-bid Dick contracts are raping the region.

Since every aspect of humanity is being destroyed by our sometime unconscious and sometimes active denial of War, Inc's profound, multi-tentacled cancer, we need to drastically reduce the size of our military and "defense" budget. Yes, we have a new world, but the response to violence can never be "shocking and awful" more violence, especially since Iraq and Afghanistan were OVER reactions to the filthy imaginations of BushCo.

To encourage the reduction of violence and poverty, state education and health care should be free for all of our countrypersons, not just the ones who tragically, and for what ever reason, got sucked into being paid assassins for Uncle War, Inc. The need for the VA system would be eliminated, because a new-improved USA would not be creating damaged vets faster than they could (or even want to) fix them.

WE need to open our eyes and not blindly follow politicians because of the letter that

goes after their names on the ballot. In almost every case this election season since the presumptive nominees have been declared, it has been very difficult to distinguish the D from the R. WE should be demanding more from politicians and not allow the lowest common denominator to grovel and pander his way into the oval office, again. Haven't we had enough?


What WE can do for humanity right now is break our individual ties to War, Inc. WE have to educate our children that politicians like Obama just want them to do the dirty work of War, Inc and have no feelings or compassion for their cannon fodder or the families of the cannon fodder who will be mourning instead of celebrating this weekend.


Fireworks are pretty and if you can afford the gas, go see a show. But never allow your mind to wander far from what our Republic has degenerated into over the past 232 years.

**BlackCommentator.com** Guest Commentator, *Cindy Sheehan is the mother of Spc. Casey Austin Sheehan who was KIA in Iraq on 04/04/04. She is a co-founder and President of [Gold Star Families for Peace](#) and the author of two books: [Not One More Mother's Child](#) and [Dear President Bush \(City Lights Open Media\)](#). Cindy is currently [running for election](#) to the House of Representatives in the 8th Congressional District of California (Nancy Pelosi's seat). Click [here](#) to contact Ms. Sheehan.*

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