

Reflection on a Memorial Day Peace Parade

*Letter to the Editor of Rochester Newspaper
by Doug Noble*

Editor:

Your Memorial Day editorial highlights the undeniable sacrifice of those who died in service to the nation, often courageously and honorably. You mistakenly assert, however, along with countless others, that their sacrifice has secured our nation's "freedom." You insist that "the memory of those who died protecting freedom, the fabric of this nation, deserves serious reflection." I agree; here is mine:

In fact, no US soldier's death in Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, or anywhere else in the global "war on terror" can arguably be said to have secured or protected our freedom.

Instead, all these military misadventures, fought for profits, ideology, vengeance, or inept policies, have, by any measure, eroded our freedoms and made us less secure. Homeland Security restrictions, Patriot Act measures, and evisceration of our first amendment rights are the real domestic consequences of these wars.

We now have intensified surveillance of our private lives, along with rapacious prosecution of journalists, whistleblowers, nonviolent protesters, and any other persons or activities suspected of "terrorism." And our creation of endless new enemies through our mindless warmongering have made us decidedly less secure while we have at the same time become less free.

There is one way, however, that we as a nation have become more free. Free to be more brutal and violent. Free to ignore international law. Free to detain indefinitely. Free to

torture. Free to target for assassination. Free to "shoot to kill." Free to conduct endless war. Grotesquely, the honorable deaths of our fallen soldiers, in order not to have been in vain, are used by our leaders and patriotic citizenry to justify and thereby perpetuate this brutal freedom. Sadly, only in this horrific, unpardonable sense can our fallen soldiers be said to have died for our freedom.