

A Toolkit for Antimilitarist Action at your Local Occupy/Dis-Occupy Movement:

RESIST Empire

REBUILD Our World

RECREATE Solidarity



What is this action?

This action was developed by members of South Asia Solidarity Initiative, War Resisters League, and a multi-racial group of individuals who are committed to showing how corporate dollars and government dollars are connected to U.S. aggression around the world and within our borders. During this action, a group of people take over a visible area of a public space at an Occupy-related event with signs that display snapshots of U.S. military interventions since 1950 (soon to be expanded to the rest of the 20th century), with their mouths covered with stickers that display the U.S. flag and various corporate logos. Participants are asked to stay silent during this somber public intervention about the costs of U.S. war and militarism.

Photos:

<https://picasaweb.google.com/104456142857345573261/EmpireOnWallStreet?authkey=Gv1sRgCIfZicKJ6Oii5QE>

Video:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glSr_60qbJI

Flyer:

<https://www.warresisters.org/sites/default/files/Empireonows.pdf>

Why do this action?

This is such an incredible moment of possibility for the people of the U.S. to push back against all forms of domination backed by systems and institutions that were created for the benefit of a few. There is so much happening at all our local Occupy movements that we wonder on the one hand whether we can effectively move forward in the work as it is with our limited amount of time and energy and, on the other, if we can move forward at all if we don't add to the analysis being put forward by this national, and now global, movement. For those of us who originally planned and participated in this action at Occupy Wall Street on October 14th, 2011, we did this because we are committed to bringing a

discussion of U.S. military aggression throughout the world as well as the militarization of U.S. communities and borders to the Occupy/dis-Occupy movements. We have felt discouraged in certain moments by the lack of attention being paid to U.S. militarism, while it continues to act as a poison throughout the world and as a drain on U.S. resources that should be used to support local community needs and infrastructure. Instead of either ignoring our concerns or giving up on the Occupy moment entirely, we have chosen to intervene in the space that Occupy has created to give voice to peoples' needs and demands with a creative action to remind ourselves and one another about why the struggle against U.S. militarism is deeply connected to the struggle against economic austerity and corporate domination. Also, there's this:

- As part of the "Global War on Terror," the U.S. is currently at war in Afghanistan, Iraq (though U.S. troops are beginning to leave, soon to be replaced with 17,000 private contractors), Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia.
- The U.S. currently has Special Forces Operatives ("the Army's most specialized experts in unconventional warfare" according to their own website) in 76 countries around the world.
- The U.S. currently has at least 700 military bases outside of its borders.
- There are Predator drones flying over the U.S.-Mexico border, the same remotely piloted aircrafts that are being used to drop bombs on people living in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Yemen, Iraq, and Somalia.

Materials:

- Black poster board
- Glue or rubber cement
- Large-sized white labels (see below for graphics to print out on labels)
- Markers
- The timeline of U.S military interventions provided in this toolkit (see below), each date printed out on a separate white sheet of paper
- Blank pieces of white paper
- Instructions for the action (see below), printed out on individual white sheets of paper
- Copies of a flyer about U.S. militarism, our tax dollars spent on war, and corporate war profiteers (make your own [or use the one linked here](#)) that asks people to take action
- Flashlights if you're doing this in the evening

Number of participants:

Between 40-70 to hold signs and 10 or more people to hand out flyers, take photos, and film the action.

Length of time:

As long as you want, but the longer the better, so that a large number of people will be able to see the action and join in/support what you are doing.

Directions:

1. Glue the printed out events from the timeline each to their own individual piece of black posterboard, cut to size. Glue the instructions for the action on the back of each posterboard.
2. Glue blank sheets of white paper to between 10-20 black posterboards.

3. Print out the labels with the images of the U.S. flag and corporate logos, enough for the number of signholders you expect, along with some extras.
4. Print out copies of the half-sheet flyer which we've titled "Empire on Wall Street" or create and print a flyer of your own.
5. Pick a date and time for your action that is timed with an Occupy/dis-Occupy-related event that you might want to be at regardless of this action. Promote your action! Ask people to come and support, hold signs, take photos or video, and/or hand out flyers. Have them bring flashlights if needed. Make a Facebook event, a mini-flyer that you can hand out at events, and an email that you blast out as widely as possible. Use the photos and video from our October 14th action as part of your promotion efforts. Contact local community organizations in your city whose membership would support an action like this (perhaps because they've been the targets or victims of U.S. military aggression) and invite them to participate. (If they can't participate in your action, be sure to ask them what your group can do to support their participation in the Occupy movement and do it!)
6. Make sure that yours is a SAFE action, especially if you're inviting people who cannot (for reasons of not having U.S. citizenship or of expecting to receive harsher punishment due to racism, classism, transphobia, etc.) or do not want to get arrested. This means DON'T, for example, do this action in the same area where a civil disobedience action is underway.
7. When people arrive the day of, give them the sign of their choice and line them up so that the signs read chronologically, like a narrative timeline.
8. Encourage them to take a sticker label to cover their mouth and to read the instructions on the back of their sign.
9. Have people flyer the area around the action and talk with passersby about why you're there.
10. Encourage those people who are flyering to ask passersby if they want to write their own story from a particular year with a marker in the same format as the timeline on one of the blank signs and hold it up alongside the others.
11. Make sure you get a lot of documentation of the event! Take your own photos and video and if you see the media there, introduce yourself to them, ask if they have any questions about the action, and get their contact info if possible. You'll want to check on that publication/blog/news station's website the following day.
12. After people have stood with their signs for as long as makes sense for your particular action, have everyone gather for a short debrief, where people get to share about how the action made them feel, any particular things they noticed during their interactions with onlookers, anything they really appreciated about the action, and what they would like to see improved on for next time.

Instructions for Participants:

Thank you for participating in our action about the role of U.S. militarism in this moment of national and global crisis and resistance. We're so glad to have you standing with us, as a part of this group of people who care deeply about ending U.S. militarism within and outside of our borders. We'd like to ask you to please follow a few guidelines while you're standing here, holding this sign:

1. Try your best to stay silent. This is a somber action and it distracts from the tone of the action if participants are chatting with each other or friends that stop by. If you feel that you need to say something to someone, try to make it as brief as possible during the time that you're participating in the action.
2. Try your best not to smile or laugh. Think of this as a performance. Even if you're not feeling somber in that particular moment, it's a good idea to at least try to feel the gravity of what we're putting out into the world. Use that to guide your actions and facial expressions while we're holding these signs that represent grave and, often, catastrophic events for those people who were/are directly affected by them.
3. If possible, please wear a sticker over your mouth. The stickers are a clear visual for passersby about the guilty parties involved when we're talking about U.S. militarism—most notably, the U.S. government and U.S.-based corporations. They're also a great visual to have represented in the media, as many feel that these dominant players are silencing our collective voice against Empire, war, militarism, and occupation.
4. If you are able to stay until the end of this action, please participate in the short debrief that will follow it.
5. If you don't know much about the historic event written on the front of your sign, look it up when you get home and share that story with others in your life.
6. Leave us with your contact info so that we can be in touch with you about future actions!

Sample Announcement:

November 17th National day of Action
“Resist Empire, Reclaim Our World, Recreate Solidarity”
An Artistic Intervention

October 7th, 2011 marked 10 years since the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and the start of the Global "War on Terror" expanding through military aggression into Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. The occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan have caused hundreds of thousands in civilian casualties. Given the increased war profiteering from U.S. corporations and the over 50% federal discretionary spending for U.S. led wars, the issue of militarism must be made central to the growing Occupation Movement around the country.

In an effort to highlight the economic and human devastation U.S. militarism has caused across the globe for decades, we are creating an artistic intervention on the November 17th National Day of Action. Snapshots of U.S. military actions over the last 60 years will be displayed on signs in a bold and embodied expression.

On November 17th, join us to participate in this action by holding signs, passing out flyers for concrete things people can do to resist militarization & war, or stand in solidarity.

**SNAPSHOTS OF U.S.
MILITARY ACTIONS
OVER THE LAST 60
YEARS**

*** NOTE: THIS LIST DOES NOT
INCLUDE PRE-1950 ACTIONS;
DOES NOT INCLUDE ALL POST-
1950 ACTIONS; AND ONLY
VERY-BRIEFLY SUMMARIZES
THE ONES INCLUDED**

*** PLEASE: DO GIVE US
FEEDBACK AND SUGGESTIONS**

KOREA

1951-1953

MAJOR WAR –

U.S. STILL

MAINTAINS

BASES

IRAN

1953

**CIA OVERTHROWS
DEMOCRACY,
INSTALLS SHAH**

GUATEMALA

1954

**CIA DIRECTS
COUP TO
OVERTHROW
ARBENZ**

LEBANON

1958

**ARMY AND
MARINE
INTERVENTION**

VIETNAM

1950s-1970s

**LONG AND EXPANSIVE
WAR WITH
UNPRECEDENTED
AERIAL BOMBING,
1-2 MILLION KILLED**

CUBA

1961-1962

**CIA-DIRECTED
FAILED INVASION--
AND MISSILE CRISIS
THREATENING
NUCLEAR WAR**

INDONESIA

1965-1967

**MILLION KILLED
IN CIA-ASSISTED
COUP AND
REPRESSIVE
MASSACRES**

**LOS
ANGELES
1965**

**NATIONAL GUARD
MEMBERS JOIN
POLICE TO REPRESS
UPRISING IN
MOSTLY-BLACK
WATTS
NEIGHBORHOOD**

DOMINICAN

REPUBLIC

1965-1966

**SECOND U.S.
OCCUPATION
(AFTER FIRST IN
1916-1924) BY
ARMY AND
MARINES**

DETROIT

1967

PRESIDENT SENDS

IN ARMY TO

REPRESS BLACK

UPRISING; 43

KILLED

UNITED

STATES

1968

**AFTER MARTIN
LUTHER KING IS
KILLED, OVER
21,000 SOLDIERS
DEPLOYED IN U.S.
CITIES**

CAMBODIA

1969-1970s

**U.S. BOMBING AND
INTERVENTION
COMBINED WITH
INTERNAL
CONFLICT KILLS 1-2
MILLION**

**OHIO &
MISSISSIPPI
1970**

**NATIONAL GUARD
MEMBERS KILLED
FOUR KENT STATE
STUDENT ACTIVISTS.
TWO STUDENTS KILLED
BY POLICE AT JACKSON
STATE A WEEK LATER.**

LAOS

1969-1970s

**CARPET
BOMBING
AND
INVASION**

SOUTH

DAKOTA

1973

**ARMY AND FBI SIEGE
AFTER LAKOTA
ACTIVISTS “OCCUPY”
WOUNDED KNEE; 2
KILLED. (IN 1890, U.S.
CAVALRY MASSACRED
150 LAKOTA THERE)**

CHILE

1973

**CIA-BACKED
COUP OUSTS
ALLENDE,
INSTALLS
PINOCHET**

ANGOLA

1976-92

**CIA ASSISTS
FORCES ALIGNED
WITH APARTHEID
SOUTH AFRICAN
REGIME.**

EL

SALVADOR

1980s

**U.S. BACKS
MILITARY REGIME
AND DEATH
SQUADS AGAINST
POPULAR
MOVEMENT.**

NICARAGUA

1980s

**U.S. ORGANIZES
AND DIRECTS
“CONTRA” TERROR
AGAINST
SANDANISTA
GOVERNMENT**

IRAQ

1990 – 20???

**WAR, BOMBING,
SANCTIONS, INVASION,
OCCUPATION, AND
INSTALLATION OF BASES --
KILLS MILLIONS AND
DEVASTATES SOCIETY.
DIRECT COST OF WAR SINCE
2003, \$800 BILLION AND
COUNTING.**

**LOS
ANGELES**

1992

**ARMY AND
MARINES
DEPLOYED AGAINST
ANTI-POLICE
BRUTALITY
UPRISING.**

SOMALIA

1992-1994

**U.S.-LED
MILITARY
INTERVENTION**

YUGOSLAVIA

1999

NATO

BOMBING AND

OCCUPATION

WORLDWIDE

2001 – 20??

**U.S. AND WORLDWIDE ALLIES'
MILITARY AND REPRESSION
AGENDA LAUNCHED UNDER GUISE**

**OF 'GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR' –
KIDNAPPING & TORTURE REGIME
ARE ESCALATED & NORMALIZED
AT GUANTANAMO, ABU GHRAIB,
BAGRAM, AND DOZENS OF
SECRETIVE AND EXTRA-LEGAL
SITES.**

AFGHANISTAN

2001 – 20???

**U.S. INVASION AND
OCCUPATION, ARMING
REACTIONARY FORCES,
INSTALLATION OF BASES.
DIRECT COST OF WAR
SINCE 2001 \$500 BILLION
AND COUNTING.**

PHILIPPINES

2001 – 20??

**TRAINING AND
BACKING OF
REPRESSIVE
MILITARY**

COLOMBIA

2000s

**U.S. BACKS
REPRESSIVE MILITARY
AND BRUTAL
PARAMILITARIES**

HAITI

2004

U.S. MILITARY

BACKS COUP

AGAINST

ARISTIDE

PAKISTAN

2001 – 20??

**U.S. MILITARY AND CIA
BOMBARD WITH DRONES
AND RAID AT WILL — BACK
REGIME'S BRUTAL
MILITARISM AND
REPRESSION — KILLING
CIVILIANS AND
DEVASTATING SOCIETY**

SOMALIA

2001 – 20??

**U.S. BACKS
ETHIOPIAN INVASION
– U.S. BOMBS AND
RAIDS, FURTHER
DEVASTATING
SOCIETY**

YEMEN

2001 – 20???

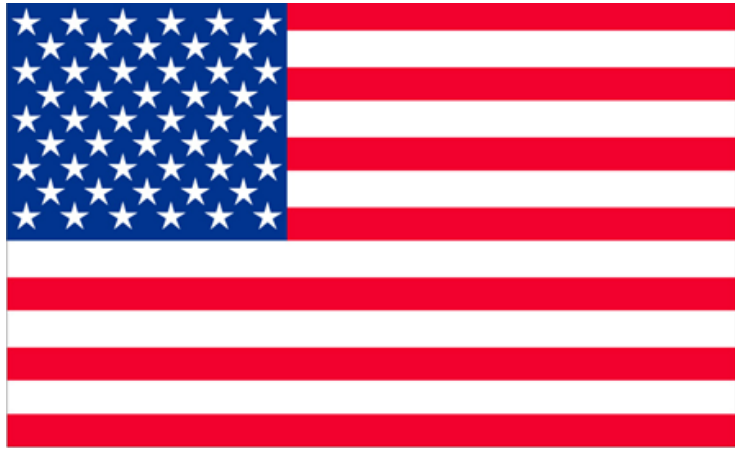
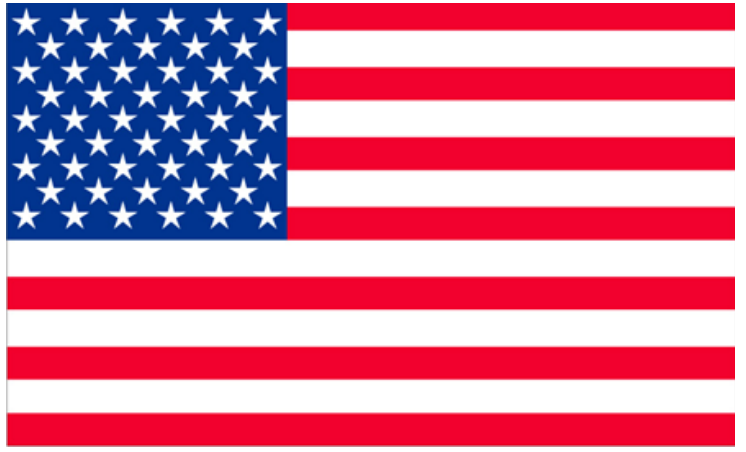
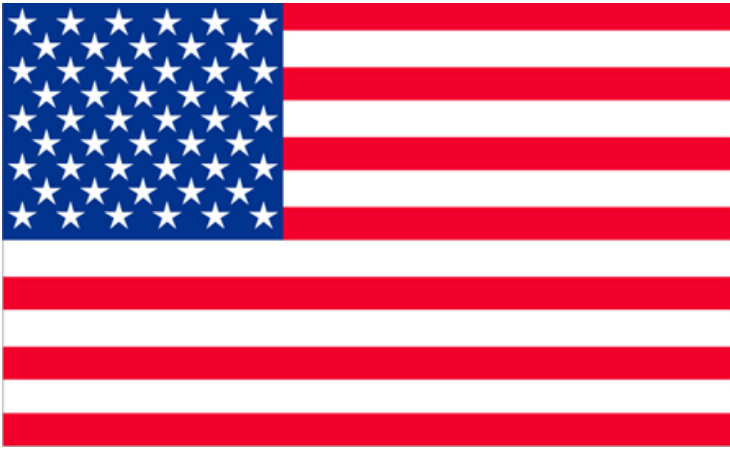
**U.S. BOMBINGS,
RAIDS, AND
ASSASSINATIONS**

LIBYA

2011

NATO

BOMBING

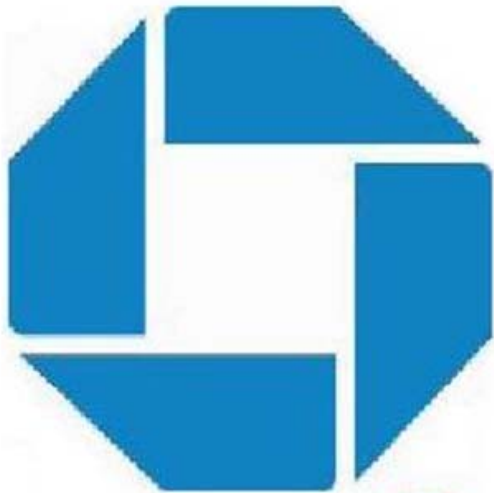




CHASE 



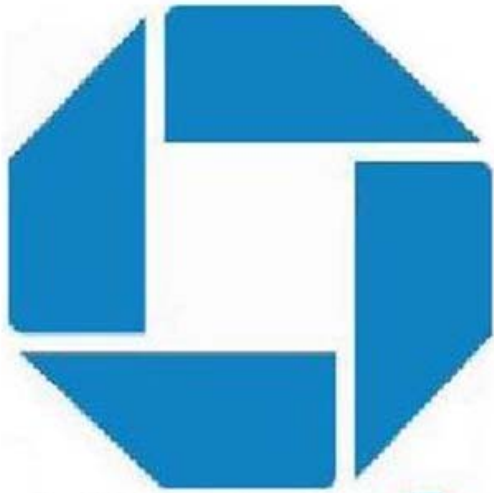
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