

# Against War: Standards

Folks who read or listen to me know that I am deeply against war; indeed, I have been against war since my earliest memories, going back to the Vietnam War. But why?

To answer simply: I have standards. War is about “breaking things and killing people;” especially the latter. Now, I am no pacifist; there are times when I think it might be justifiable and proper to kill a person; but I think it morally abhorrent to do so lightly, without consideration of the harm, with hardly any justification but rumors and speculation.

The drone strikes in the Middle East, and the Tomahawk missile strikes in Syria, are cases in point. A drone strike is not a sniper bullet, killing a particular guilty person; it lays waste to that person’s home, to their neighbors, to the people across the street who may be trying to help the wounded and dying. It is an atrocity; it should be loudly denounced as a war crime, not praised. Nor can we be certain of the quality of the evidence which led to the strike in the first place.

Similarly in Syria; we hear rumors that a poisonous gas was used by Assad. Before any investigation of these allegations was even possible, missiles flew; people were killed. No amount of sophistry could possibly turn this into a morally justifiable act.

These acts did not make the United States safer; if anything, they increased the number of people who wish us ill. They do not add to America’s greatness, but diminish it. They are of value only to war fetishists, to worshipers of Mars, god of war, and to war profiteers.

Yes, folks, I am against this war, and against the next one. I think little of the politicians and pundits and preachers and profiteers and all those who praise these acts of mass murder. Of all the fools, tools and trolls in this world, these are the most despicable. If government exists to protect us, let it protect us from these. With “protectors” such as these, we hardly need enemies.

Constitutionally, Congress ought to declare war before the government undertakes war. But I suggest a still higher standard. Before condemning a single person to death for even the most heinous of crimes, our criminal justice system demands a high standard of evidence, and still a single juror may stay that sentence, by refusing to convict. Let Congress hold itself to similar standards; if even one person of twelve refuses to declare war, let the matter pass.