

# **War Is Meaningless**

**By Miles Statz**  
**Baraboo High School Class of 2018**  
**Veterans for Peace Scholarship Recipient**

During the entire span of human interaction, war has been a recurring theme. From the prehistoric wars between tribes to the current interactions between nations, each and every conflict has been completely meaningless from bottom to top. Psychologically, war affects the human race for the permanent worse. PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) remains the leading cause for suicide among veterans worldwide. The cost of war in tax money is nearly unbelievable, in America especially, where we spend as much money on war materials as the next eight countries combined. Lastly, the social effect of war has a widespread effect, spreading from legislature to culture. Ultimately, war has never been and never will be the answer. Conflict between parties can always be resolved without the loss of human life and wellbeing.

The social effect of war hurts society on a multitude of depths and levels. With war enforced by government comes an uprising in nationalistic attitudes. In turn a perception of the world changes for the country's children. Views of the world beyond their home country turn to hate and away from understanding. As a result, racism and bigotry trend toward commonality. On a governmental and political level, war reinforces party polarization and identification. With human lives on the line, an emotional factor becomes involved in the political conversation and debate. With this, the fire grows larger and the divide between sides even more vicious. With time, a new generation comes to the helm of a country with hate in their hearts and racism in their minds. War destroys and separates society.

The most concrete and obvious evidence of the horrors of war comes in monetary terms. The United States spend 54 percent of their federal budget on military. Totaling up to a whopping \$600 billion, a percentage and amount that will likely be increased with the current administration. Anyone could tell you what a portion of that percentage could do for the rest of the country. Hundreds of billions of dollars could alleviate our debt to foreign entities, reinvigorate our public schools, pay off the entire country's college debt, make college free, refresh the entire freeway system, pay teachers more, actually take care of our veterans and lower taxes for all. The opportunities are endless and dumfounding. Decreasing government spending on military even by a few percent could alleviate the difficulties on the shoulders of millions of U.S. citizens.

The most prominent effect on veterans themselves comes in the psychological form. The sight of gore and death combined with incredibly high stress and pressure situations creates memories that are better suited to be pushed down that dealt with. This dynamic is enhanced when the situations that veterans are brought back to is dealt with poorly by our government. To this day, 40,000 veterans remain homeless in America. The horrors of PTSD cause 20 veterans to kill themselves every day in America alone. It's obvious that war causes intense psychological problems. This goes without mention of the cognitive strain that the lack of these soldiers presence at home puts on their families and friends.

In totality, the repercussions of war are terrible and the supposed successes of any war could never outweigh the pain of war itself. Any victory has, on the other side, incredible loss and poverty in its aftermath. War creates and edits a society that encourages ignorant nationalism and hatred. The financial deficits that war elicits are unbelievable and the monetary sums that could be redirected to different causes could revolutionize American infrastructure and policy implementation. Humanistically, the effects of war on the soldier are psychologically demeaning and incredibly destructive. All in all, war will never result in the betterment of anything. War has never been the answer and never will be.