Opinion
Guest Voices
Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces take their positions during clashes with the m

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces take their positions during clashes with the militant Islamic State in the city of Ramadi, Iraq, June 19, 2014. (OSV News/Reuters)



by John Dear

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On this week's episode of "The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast," I speak with peace activist Ann Wright. She is a retired U.S. Army colonel who worked in the military for 29 years, 13 on active duty and 16 in the Army Reserves, as well as a retired U.S. state department official.

In March 2003, when the U.S. started bombing Iraq, she was one of three state department officials to publicly resign in protest of the U.S. war on Iraq. Since then, she has become a full-time activist working to end war, often working with organizations such as Veterans for Peace, CODEPINK, International Peace Bureau and World Beyond War.



U.S. Army Col. Ann Wright speaks in 2011 at the fourth annual "Make Food Not War" awards dinner hosted by Peace Action Staten Island. (Wikimedia Commons/Thomas Good/NLN)

Wright travels to places of conflict around the world, such as Iran, North Korea, Yemen, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Palestine and Cuba, to see firsthand the effects of U.S. warmaking. She also speaks out and writes about the need to resist war and pursue peace. She has been a coordinator with the Gaza Freedom Flotilla for 16 years and was jailed in Israeli prisons twice for being on Gaza flotillas.

We discuss her public resignation over the U.S. war on Iraq, and her work for peace in Afghanistan and Palestine as well as for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

"I just could not be a part of what I knew was going to be a horrific death for so many people in Iraq," she said. "Never underestimate the power of trying to get people together to do something that will galvanize the rest of our community and the country. It's our own conscience we have to watch out for. We have to be able to say: 'I've done what I could to try to stop the violence in our world.' Be consistent and keep moving!"

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