



GLOBAL AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM

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### **Nomination of David Swanson, USA, for the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize**

I am qualified to nominate because of my status as an emeritus Professor of International Law at Princeton University. By this letter I hereby nominate David Swanson (b. Dec. 1, 1969, New York, NY) for the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize. Swanson has made exceptional contributions to world peace of the type that Alfred Nobel had in mind when he established his prize for “the champions of peace,” pointing specifically to the visionary ideas of the period (creating the fraternity of nations, by disarmament and peace congresses).

Swanson is a very productive author, activist, journalist, and radio host who pursues his peace and disarmament agenda with a unique combination of energy, dedication, and now – at 45 – also experience. His books are widely read and influential. He has a rare combination of talent both for written and oral communication and is frequently invited to speak throughout the United States and internationally. As a reporter and a columnist he is widely published. He is an online presence, blogging at his own website <dauidswanson.org> and at <WarIsACrime.org> which is a site he maintains as a venue for numerous antiwar bloggers. That site was originally called <AfterDowningStreet.org> and is widely credited with having created awareness in the United States and elsewhere of false official statements supportive of wars. This started with his influential exposure of governmental misinformation in the course of seeking to mobilize public support for engagement in the Iraq war (Downing Street Memo/Minutes). He has made available abundant additional evidence that confirm attempts by governments and a compliant media to deceive the general public so that it will go along with unjust and unlawful wars.

During 2014 (“the last expired year” – as Nobel mentions in his will) Swanson has been instrumental in creating a new global nonprofit organization called <WorldBeyondWar.org>. As its director Swanson is in charge, hands on, of a major effort to build a truly international effort, connecting people and organizations, and building support for a variety of antiwar endeavors around the world. Thousands of people from 89 nations have signed a pledge at this website in

recent months, indicating their desire to work to eliminate war altogether. World Beyond War has begun working to advance global public understanding of the possibility, necessity, and desirability of ending all war. The arguments made closely parallel those more fully developed in Swanson's book, *War No More, the Case for Abolition*.

World Beyond War identifies itself as "a global nonviolent movement to end war and establish a just and sustainable peace." The new organization describes its mission as follows:

"We aim to create awareness of popular support for ending war and to further develop that support. We work to advance the idea of not just preventing any particular war but abolishing the entire institution. We strive to replace a culture of war with one of peace in which nonviolent means of conflict resolution take the place of bloodshed. While public opinion has moved against war, we intend to seize this moment to crystallize that opinion into a movement that spreads awareness that war can be ended, that its ending is hugely popular, that war should be ended as it endangers rather than protects — and harms rather than benefits — and that there are steps we can and must take to move toward war's reduction and abolition. War is not ending on its own. It is being confronted by popular resistance. But too often that resistance takes the form of denouncing one war as unacceptable (in contrast to theoretical good wars), or opposing a war because it leaves a military ill-prepared for other wars, or rejecting a weapon or a tactic as less proper than others, or opposing wasteful military spending in favor of greater efficiency (as if the entire enterprise were not an economic waste and a moral abomination). Our goal is to support steps away from war and to spread understanding of them as just that — steps in the direction of war's elimination. . . . We are building something truly international, connecting people and organizations, and adding support to antiwar endeavors of all kinds around the world. This is a global campaign of education, lobbying, and nonviolent direct action."

World Beyond War is a worthy cause that would put the funding component of a Nobel Peace Prize to excellent use.

The examples of Swanson's other and earlier activities are so many that I can only name a few for the sake of illustration. He is campaign coordinator for <RootsAction.org> an online activist organization that works against militarism and in support of diplomacy. Working with WorldBeyondWar and RootsAction and in coalition with numerous other organizations, Swanson's work has contributed to the rejection of the U.S. apparent plan to attack Syria with missiles in 2013, and the rejection in February 2014 of a bill in the U.S. Congress that would have moved the United States in the direction of war with Iran, and spreading the awareness of the horror produced by drone strikes, perhaps partly responsible for their reduced use. Swanson has been campaigning against military spending and working to spread to the other 49 U.S. states the model of the state of Connecticut that is creating a commission to convert its industries from war to peace. RootsAction has raised funding to make it possible for the allied organization <ExposeFacts.org> to install billboards in Washington, D.C. featuring a clarion call from Daniel Ellsberg to encourage federal employees to become whistleblowers.

Furthermore, Swanson hosts Talk Nation Radio, a weekly program syndicated to many radio stations and advancing the causes of disarmament, diplomacy, and peace. He has been an organizer of numerous events, conferences, rallies, and protests, including the 2006 Camp

Democracy event in Washington, D.C., and the 2011 "Occupation" of Freedom Plaza in Washington, D.C., as well as the 2011 conference on the Military Industrial Complex at 50 in Charlottesville, Virginia.

David Swanson as much as anyone active in the world today may fit precisely the letter and spirit of Alfred Nobel's will and his wish to stimulate practical work for global cooperation with respect to disarmament and the abolition of war as a social institution. It is my distinct honor to bring David Swanson to the Committee's attention with the hope that his qualification for the 2015 prize will receive deserved appreciation.

Sincerely yours,

Richard Falk  
Albert G. Milbank Professor of International Law Emeritus, Princeton University

Annexes:

### **Annex 1. List of publications by David Swanson**

Swanson's books include:

*War No More: The Case for Abolition* (2013) -- with a foreword by Kathy Kelly.

*When the World Outlawed War* (2011) -- named by Ralph Nader as one of the six books everyone should read. A forgotten story from the 1920s of how people created a treaty to ban all war -- a treaty still on the books but not remembered.

*War Is A Lie* (2010) -- widely praised best-selling classic. "There are three insightful books I've read that explain how and why no good can come of the current U.S. reliance on military force and war in seeking its desired 'Pax Americana': *War Is A Racket* by General Smedley Butler; *War Is A Force That Gives Us Meaning* by Chris Hedges, and *War Is A Lie* by David Swanson." — Coleen Rowley, former FBI special agent, whistleblower, and *Time* magazine person of the year.

*Iraq War Among World's Worst Events* (2013) -- "At 10 years since the launch of Operation Iraqi Liberation (to use the original name with the appropriate acronym, OIL) and over 22 years since Operation Desert Storm, there is little evidence that any significant number of people in the United States have a realistic idea of what our government has done to the people of Iraq, or of how these actions compare to other horrors of world history."

*Tube World* (2012) -- This children's book has received an enthusiastic initial response.

*The Military Industrial Complex at 50* (2012) -- the most comprehensive collection available explaining what the military industrial complex is, where it comes from, what damage it does, what further destruction it threatens, and what can be done and is being done to chart a different course.

*Daybreak: Undoing the Imperial Presidency and Forming a More Perfect Union* (2009) -- "There have now been many books written which chronicle the imperial, lawless presidency of the Bush era, but Swanson's superb new book -- *Daybreak: Undoing the Imperial Presidency and Forming a More Perfect Union* -- is one of the very few to examine how we can recover from it and reverse its pernicious trends." --Glenn Greenwald

*The 35 Articles of Impeachment and the Case for Prosecuting George W. Bush* (2008) -- Now more than ever. (Swanson wrote the introduction, as well as having in fact organized a team of writers to draft the articles for then-U.S. Congressman Dennis Kucinich.)

Swanson wrote the foreword to *Peace Philosophy and Public Life*, 2014; a chapter in *Why Peace* edited by Marc Guttman, 2012; the foreword to *Another Life* by Karen Malpede, 2011; two chapters in *Fix America*, 2011; a chapter in *Project Rewire: New Media from the Inside Out* by Judy Daubenmier; a chapter called "Flame-Broiled Shark: How Predatory Lending Victims Fought Back and Won," in *The Wealth Inequality Reader* by Dollars and Sense and United for a Fair Economy; and the article "2009: Year of the Filibuster" in *At Issue: Does the U.S. Two Party System Still Work?* published by Gale, a part of Cengage Learning.

Swanson has been published in *the Guardian*, *the Seattle Times*, *Baltimore Sun*, *Washington Examiner*, *Humanist*, *MicroMega*, *Charlottesville Daily Progress*, *Sojourner's*, *Truthout.org*, *Alternet.org*, *HuffingtonPost.org*, *OpEdNews.com*, *ConsortiumNews.com*, *CommonDreams.org*, and many other publications, including a growing list of international papers and websites. He has been quoted in and reported on in numerous books and periodicals including *the Nation*, *In These Times*, *Progressive*, *Mother Jones*, and other newspapers and magazines.

Swanson is a frequent guest on radio and television, and has been interviewed on CNN, PBS, C-Span, Democracy Now!, Free Speech TV, Fox, Link TV, RealNews.com, and many others.

Much of what Swanson does in blogging and organizing does not fall under a particular organization, but his formal employment includes the directorship of WorldBeyondWar since its creation in 2014; Campaign Coordinator for Roots Action (RootsAction.org) since March 2011; part-time work for and member of the Communications Committee of Veterans For Peace (Swanson is not a war veteran but an associate member of VFP); online organizer and blogger in 2009-2010 for Free Speech for People; and since 2005 Cofounder and Coordinator of After Downing Street (AfterDowningStreet.org, renamed WarIsACrime.org), a coalition of dozens of organizations that forced the Downing Street Memo and other evidence into the U.S. media and sought accountability for the fraudulent marketing of the war on Iraq. AfterDowningStreet was named a Most Valuable Progressive by the *Nation* magazine's John Nichols in 2005, 2006, and 2007.

Swanson has been honored with a portrait in Robert Shetterly's "Americans Who Tell the Truth" collection, and has been honored by numerous peace organizations.

Swanson is on the National Committee of the War Resisters League. He has served as a board member of the Backbone Campaign, Voters for Peace, and the Liberty Tree Foundation for the Democratic Revolution, and as chair of the Robert Jackson Steering Committee. Swanson joined the board of the National Coalition to Protect Student Privacy in December 2011. Swanson is Secretary of Peace in the Green Shadow Cabinet. He received a Beacon of Peace award from the Eisenhower Chapter of Veterans For Peace in 2012. He has served on the steering committee of the Charlottesville Center for Peace and Justice (2006-2008).

Swanson holds a Master's in Philosophy from University of Virginia.

Nobel nomination 2015, David Swanson

## **Annex 2. A selection of statements on the merits of David Swanson**

Here are some things people have said about him:

"David Swanson is a truth-teller and witness-bearer whose voice and action warrant our attention." —Cornel West, author.

"David Swanson is the most consistently great writer of this generation." —Jean Athey.

"The world needs more true advocates of democracy like David Swanson!" —Thom Hartmann, radio host.

"David Swanson will be remembered and well recognized as the citizen who held up a lamp in the darkness and cried, as did good Tom Paine: 'We have it in our power to begin the world over again.'" —John Nichols, columnist, *The Nation*.

"David Swanson predicates his belief that nonviolence can change the world on careful research and historical analysis." —Kathy Kelly, Voices for Creative Nonviolence.

"David Swanson's *War Is A Lie* may be the most comprehensive antiwar statement available in the English language." —Kevin Young, Znet.

"Our times cry out for a smart, witty and courageous Populist who hasn't forgotten how to play offense. Luckily we have David Swanson." —Mike Ferner, President of Veterans For Peace.

"David Swanson, who has been a one-man wonder leading the charge for accountability, writes a compelling narrative that inspires not just outrage, but ACTION." —Medea Benjamin, Code Pink and Global Exchange.

"David Swanson despises war and lying, and unmaskes them both with rare intelligence. I learn something new on every page." —Jeff Cohen, founder of FAIR.

"David Swanson's book is a masterful exposure of the emergence of a monarch-like president coupled with an effete, irresponsible, and constitutionally ignorant Congress." —Bruce Fein, former Associate Deputy Attorney General.

"David Swanson has written a fascinating account of how peace once became the law of the land. It is particularly pertinent in the era of the Endless War, by giving encouragement and suggestions of a path forward to those who want to give peace a chance." —Liz Holtzman, former member of the U.S. Congress.

"David Swanson is an antidote to the toxins of complacency and evasion. He insists on rousing the sleepwalkers, confronting the deadly prevaricators and shining a bright light on possibilities for a truly better world." —Norman Solomon, author of *War Made Easy*.

"I was just on a 10-day speaking tour in England, Wales and Scotland. While there, during the Q & A's after my talks, people would ask me what is going on in the U.S. They would say they hear nothing about the peace movement in their country. I told them to check your web site. I told them it was the best place to find out what is going on at the grassroots level in the U.S. I told them I check it 3 times a day. It was good to have your site as a resource to refer to. Best wishes." —Bruce K. Gagnon, Coordinator, Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space

In December 2011, The Hook newspaper in Charlottesville, Va., wrote: "When conservatives hear progressive political activist David Swanson coming, they might want to run away. But sometimes, they do so quite literally. After Vice President Dick Cheney announced plans to speak at the Miller Center on November 16, Swanson publicly called for Cheney's arrest for conspiracy to commit torture. 'Were a local resident credibly accused of torture, I sincerely doubt you would hesitate to seek his or her immediate arrest and indictment,' Swanson wrote in a November 14 letter emailed to Charlottesville and Albemarle law enforcement and posted on his website, warisacrime.org. Mere hours later, the Miller Center announced that Cheney's visit would be postponed for 'personal reasons' and that he'd reschedule for early next year. Coincidence? Perhaps. But either way, Swanson will undoubtedly lead the welcome parade if the former Veep appears." He never did.

The Charlottesville *Daily Progress* published a profile of Swanson on March 18, 2008, which said: "For Swanson, advocating for a withdrawal from Iraq is not just passion - it's a living. Swanson is paid to help run Democrats.com, an "aggressive" progressive Web site, as well as working for myriad other antiwar groups. Additionally, he created a Web site for renowned activist Cindy Sheehan when she first gained notoriety. Swanson immersed himself in activism while a graduate student at the University of Virginia in the mid-1990s, when he worked on the living wage campaign. After a brief career in journalism, he became a communication specialist for labor organizations. Now, though, he coordinates antiwar activities across the country from his house."