

Jesse Ventura: Military doesn't 'fight for our freedom'

By Justin Peligri, CNN

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Story highlights

Former Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura spoke out against the military in a video posted on Veterans Day

He was careful to point out that he's not anti-veteran, given that he is one himself

"If we weren't involved in these wars, we would have more freedom," he said

next war."

Former wrestler and Minnesota governor Jesse Ventura has some harsh words for the armed forces this Veterans Day: If given the option today, he'd opt out of military service.

"I hate to say it, but no, I would be a conscientious objector today," the Navy special forces veteran said in [a video posted Tuesday](#). "I don't believe that the military fights for our freedom."

"They give them all the ra ra at the stadiums, and they cheer 'em on," said Ventura, who served as a Reform Party governor of the North Star state from 1999 to 2003. "But when the veterans come home, we pretty much forget about them. They're old news. They're yesterday's garbage. And it's time to move on to the

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He pointed to the fallout from the Vietnam War as an example of these attitudes -- and he predicted that veterans from more modern wars would experience the same thing.



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politically active and he hosts a show on the digital television network Ora TV called "Off The Grid."

"There gonna come back to parades, but it's gonna end about right there," he said.

Ventura did say, however, that he isn't anti-veteran. After all, he is one himself, having served in the U.S. Navy Underwater Demolition Team member during the Vietnam War.

"You can hate the war and not hate the vet. The veteran is a pawn. They have to do it. They are not given a choice," he said. "Our vets are honorable people... I bear no grudge."

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In particular, Ventura took issue with the large dollar amount pinned to foreign wars, arguing that "international corporations" are the ones who "truly run our country today."

"That's why wars are fought -- so the profiteers of war can make money," Ventura said, pointing to the large portion of the annual budget that goes toward national security and defense.

"If we weren't involved in these wars, we would have more freedom," he said.

The video appears on the website of Voices of Liberty, a group led by former Republican congressman and presidential candidate Ron Paul. It lobbies against "unjustified wars, unconstitutional surveillance, [and] extrajudicial drone assassinations," according to its website.

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