

## Peace Action Maine's Spring Gathering 2019 is May 4!



**Col. Lawrence Wilkerson**, our keynote speaker, has had a long career in the military and US government. He is currently a distinguished professor of government and public policy at the College of William and Mary and was Chief of Staff to Secretary of State Colin Powell from 2002 to 2005.

Are you surprised to find that someone with his pedigree -- a man who helped sell the false choice of war with Iraq in 2003 -- would find common cause with the peace movement? In fact, since he left the Bush administration, Wilkerson has been a vocal critic of that invasion, his role in it and the ongoing War on Terror now in its 17<sup>th</sup> year. He condemns the trillions this nation spends on war, denounces plans to intervene in Korea, Venezuela, and Iran, and asserts the U.S. is not a democracy but a war state that forces its will on the global community.

Like the peace movement, Wilkerson works on long term strategies to resolve these conflicts. Leveraging his expertise and privilege, he has partnered with the Friends Committee on National Legislation to garner Congressional support for the Iran nuclear deal. Similarly, he has worked to end the illegal U.S. support of the Saudi/UAE war on Yemen. He has spoken at Code Pink and Veterans for Peace conferences and independent media outlets like [The Real News](#) and [ActTVism Munich](#) routinely seek his professional insights as a military scholar.

It is not news that we live in uniquely precarious times. We have an administration being run by ruthless neoconservatives, intent on regime change in Iran and Venezuela, while the President and his family face unprecedented corruption charges at the federal and state level. Our next steps must be weighed carefully. Wilkerson's insider's perspective and expertise on American Empire can help us understand the challenges, strategize effectively and work to expand our reach.