

Reasons Why Americans Must Not Support a War Against Iraq

This information sheet was compiled by a group of everyday Americans who understand that true patriotism necessarily implies a willingness to be critical of the government when it fails to represent the needs of its people.

It is not in America's interest to invade Iraq.

- An unprovoked invasion of Iraq and the removal of its leader by force would only sow more seeds of anti-American sentiment among the populations of the Middle East and inspire more acts of terrorism against innocent Americans. This view was most recently voiced by experts who testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in late July and early August.
- The American economy is steadily deteriorating: The trade deficit and the budget deficit are both increasing, the tax base is declining, personal and corporate bankruptcies are on the rise at a staggering rate, consumer confidence is plummeting, investor confidence has all but disappeared, the stock market just recently hit new lows not seen since 1998, millions of Americans are without health insurance, unemployment is rising, affordable housing is almost nonexistent, the U.S. dollar is losing value (which could eventually result in inflation and rising interest rates), state governments - with California in the lead - are under severe financial duress, and the very existence of Social Security and Medicare is at peril. An expensive war will only exacerbate these problems. Is this the time to spend billions of dollars to invade a third world country clear across the globe?
- The proposed war against Iraq has nothing to do with the government's purported objective of ridding the world of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Rather the real motive behind removing Saddam Hussein from power and imposing a U.S.-friendly government is, as Henry Kissinger admitted in an op-ed piece published by *The Washington Post*, 'essentially geopolitical.' By this he meant that Saddam Hussein is not a threat to American citizens, but rather a threat to the profits of American oil corporations who are covetous of the huge amounts of oil that are inconveniently located in a country ruled by a leader who is not pro-American. It also means that establishing American hegemony in that oil-rich country is fundamental to the long term strategic -interests of multinational corporations (you know, the ones that have cheated investors out of billions of dollars) who want to increase their influence elsewhere in the world in order to hedge against the possibility of a total economic collapse in the U.S.

The U.S. currently has no credible evidence to substantiate its claims that Iraq is a threat to America.

- Outgoing Secretary of Defense, William Cohen, informed incoming President George Bush in January of 2000: "Iraq no longer poses a military threat to its neighbors."
- The administration has admitted that it has no evidence. Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Atherton, recently told reporters that in closed sessions in Sept. 2002, administration officials had been asked several times whether they had evidence

of an imminent threat from Hussein against U.S. citizens. “They said ‘no,’ ” she said, “Not ‘no, but’ or ‘maybe,’ but ‘no.’ I was stunned. Not shocked. Not surprised. Stunned.”

There is no evidence that Saddam Hussein supports militant Islamist groups.

- The February 6 edition of the *New York Times* stated, “The Central Intelligence Agency has no evidence that Iraq has engaged in terrorist operations against the United States in nearly a decade, and the agency is convinced that Saddam Hussein has not provided chemical or biological weapons to al-Qaeda or related terrorist groups.” The NYT reiterated this view in a recent editorial that was published on August 3 2002.
- The 2002 annual state department report on state-sponsored terrorism admitted that Saddam Hussein’s regime has few links with Islamic fundamentalists.
- On August 15 2002, Brent Scowcroft, one of the Republican Party’s most respected foreign policy ‘experts’ wrote an op-ed piece in the *Wall Street Journal* in which he stated, “[T]here is scant evidence to tie Saddam to terrorist organizations, and even less to the Sept. 11 attacks. Indeed Saddam’s goals have little in common with the terrorists who threaten us, and there is little incentive for him to make common cause with them. He is unlikely to risk his investment in weapons of mass destruction, much less his country, by handing such weapons to terrorists who would use them for their own purposes and leave Baghdad as the return address.”

There is no evidence that Saddam Hussein represents a nuclear threat.

- In January of 2002, the International Atomic Energy agency sent inspectors into Iraq and found no evidence of nuclear weapons.
- In 1999, a committee under the UN Security Council concluded that Iraq’s primary biological weapons facility “had been destroyed and rendered harmless.”
- Hans von Sponeck, the UN humanitarian coordinator for Iraq from 1998-2000, wrote in 2001, “Iraq today is no longer a military threat to anyone. Intelligence agencies know this. All the conjectures about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq lack evidence.”
- In late Aug. 2002, MSNBC reported, “Military officials have told NBC News that there is no evidence that Iraq has produced or obtained any nuclear fuel, clashing with the Bush administration’s official statements that Saddam Hussein is close to developing a nuclear weapon.” Numerous other U.S. military, intelligence and administration officials have made similar statements to CNN, Knight Ridder, and the Washington Post.
- David Albright, a physicist who investigated Iraq’s nuclear weapons program following the 1991 Persian Gulf War as a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency’s inspection team told *The Washington Post* that “government experts on nuclear technology who dissented from the Bush administration’s view told him they were expected to remain silent. Several Energy Department officials familiar with the aluminum shipments declined to comment.” This strongly suggests the Bush administration is lying to the American people.
- A report published by The Institute for Science and International Security in September 2002, challenged the Bush administration’s recent assertion that Iraq’s alleged importing of aluminum tubes was proof that Iraq is an imminent ‘nuclear threat.’ *The Washington Post*, summarizing the document, reported that the administration did not “provide evidence that Iraq has an operating centrifuge plant or when such a plant could be operational” The report further noted, according to the WP, that “the seized tubes were made of a kind of aluminum that is ill-suited for welding. Other specifications of the imported metal are at odds with what is known about Iraq’s previous attempts to build centrifuges. In fact, the report said, Iraq had largely abandoned aluminum for other materials, such as specialized steel and carbon fiber, in its centrifuges at the time its nuclear program was destroyed by allied bombers in the Gulf War.”
- Scott Ritter, a former UN weapons inspector who describes himself as a staunch Republican recently stated, “The manufacture of nuclear weapons emits gamma rays that would have been detected by now if they existed. We have

been watching, via satellite and other means, and we have seen none of this.”

There is no evidence that Saddam Hussein is developing and planning to use biological and chemical weapons.

- Numerous experts have challenged the so-called ‘evidence’ that has recently been released by the Bush administration asserting that Iraq is developing biological and chemical weapons. Experts who have spoken out include: Scott Ritter, a former UNCOM chief weapons inspector; Hans Blix, current UNMOVIC chief weapons inspector; Count Hans von Sponeck, former UN under-secretary general; Meir Stieglitz, an Israeli military analyst, Anthony Cordesman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and numerous other experts quoted by reputable mainstream presses, including the conservative *Washington Times*.
- Western journalists have made recent visits to several of the purported weapons facilities and have found no evidence suggesting that they are being used to produce chemical or biological weapons.

War in Iraq would be disastrous.

- An attack on Iraq could provoke Saddam Hussein into invading Israel thus drawing the region’s most resented state into the conflict. A joint U.S./Israeli war against Muslim Iraq would likely inspire uncontrollable popular uprisings in neighboring Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt.
- A U.S. attack on Iraq would be viewed upon by many in the Arab world as an unprovoked act by Western imperialists. Many fear that the pro-Western governments of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan, which are already breaking at the seams, would experience massive social unrest as a result of a U.S. invasion of Iraq.
- Saddam Hussein’s military is much stronger and loyal than the former Taliban’s rag tag army of hungry conscripts. The Iraqi dictator commands an army consisting of 350,000 men, 2,700 tanks, 90 jets, 100 helicopters, and 300 mobile anti-aircraft missile launchers. Experts agree that his extremely loyal and well-trained elite republican guard would present a considerable challenge to American troops fighting on the ground. Even Colin Powell admitted, “The Taliban neither consolidated its hold nor built regular armed forces. Iraq, on the other hand, has a strong state apparatus and a sizeable professional military.”
- A U.S. ground invasion of Iraq would require a large commitment of American soldiers because unlike in Afghanistan, where the U.S. relied heavily on the Northern Alliance as a proxy army, there are no Iraqi opposition groups powerful enough to confront Saddam’s military forces. U.S. military strategists believe a ground force of up to 250,000 American soldiers would be necessary to defeat Saddam Hussein’s army. They concede that a large number American casualties would be inevitable.
- Iraq, unlike Afghanistan, is densely populated. Civilian casualties would consequently be much worse
- An attack on Iraq would likely provoke Saddam Hussein into using whatever destructive weapons he actually has. *The Observer* (London) reported, “The planners [in the Pentagon] have decided they will have 48 hours to find and kill or capture Saddam before he tries to deploy any nuclear, biological or major conventional weapons he may have.” And former

Iraqi intelligence officer Wafiq al-Samarrai similarly stated: “The US should know that Saddam will not hesitate to use weapons of mass destruction on American military groupings. Diplomacy is the only choice for the United States.”

- Even if the proposed military operation were to succeed in ousting Saddam Hussein from power, who would replace him? The U.S. currently has no clear plan for a post-Saddam government. The various departments within the U.S. government are at odds with one another over who would be a suitable leader. And even if the U.S. could decide on a successor to Saddam Hussein, it’s certain that the Iraqis themselves, representing several different ethnic groups, would not readily accept a leader imposed upon them by a foreign power. Experts almost unanimously agree that U.S. plans to invade Iraq lack considerable foresight and hold the potential to make an already bad situation in the Middle East even worse. As Philip Gordon of the Brookings Institution said, “Removing Saddam will be opening a Pandora's box, and there might not be any easy way to close it back up.”

Almost no one supports the United States’ plan to invade Iraq.

- The Joint Chiefs of Staff (comprised of high ranking military officers) have stated their opposition to invading Iraq. On July 22, *Electronic Intelligence Weekly* reported that according to a “senior retired U.S. military official” whom the intelligence newsletter interviewed on July 15, “there is total unity among the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the regional Commanders-in-Chief, in opposition to an Iraq invasion.” The source named the new Commander of the Pacific Command as one of the more vocal critics of Washington’s war plans, “noting that the Pacific Command is the key support for all U.S. military operations in the Middle East and Persian Gulf.” On July 29 *The Washington Post* published a similar article in which it was reported: “Despite President Bush's repeated bellicose statements about Iraq, many senior U.S. military officers contend that President Saddam Hussein poses no immediate threat.” The *Post* quoted one officer who actually questioned the president's motives, saying, “I'm not aware of any linkage to al Qaeda or terrorism, so I have to wonder if this has something to do with his father being targeted by Saddam.”
- Most of the international community opposes the U.S. plan to illegally invade Iraq and forcefully dispose of Saddam Hussein. Countries that have expressed serious concerns over the Bush administration’s ambitions include: Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Morocco, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.
- Vince Cannistraro, a former CIA counterterrorism chief, told David Corn (11-30-2002), Washington editor for *The Nation*, “They [the hawks] have no reasonable plan, no magic button to push. They want to overthrow Saddam Hussein, but the only way to do that is put U.S. ground forces in Iraq. That would be a bloody mess and we would have no support whatsoever from other countries.”
- Dennis Halliday and Hans von Sponneck, former UN humanitarian coordinators for Iraq,

have authored numerous op-ed pieces in major newspapers denouncing U.S. plans for war against Iraq. The two men had resigned from their positions in the U.N. in protest of the U.N. sanctions on Iraq which they argue are genocidal because of the more than one million innocent people that have died as a direct result of the policy.

- Several former government officials have spoken against the Bush administration's current war plans, including Henry Kissinger, former secretary of state; Zbigniew Brzezinski, former national security advisor; James Baker, former secretary of state; Jack Kemp; Lawrence S. Eagleburger, former secretary of state; Jack Binns, former ambassador to Honduras; Madeline Albright, former secretary of State; former President Jimmy Carter; and James Webb, former assistant secretary of defense and secretary of the Navy.
- Even the Iraqi "opposition" groups are against U.S. plans to forcibly remove Saddam Hussein. Ayatollah Mohammad Bakr al-Hakkim of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq told one reporter, "There is no need to send troops from outside to Iraq. It could be seen as an invasion and could create new problems. . . . The best thing the US can do is force the regime not to use its heavy weapons against the people, like they did in Kosovo. Then the Iraqi people can bring change--it must be done by the Iraqis themselves." Massoud Barzani of the Kurdish Democratic Party stated back in February, "We will not be ordered by America or any others. We will not be a bargaining chip or tool of pressure to be used against Iraq." And Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan declared on August 7, "We are not for blindly participating in any attack or in any plan. . . . We are not in favor of having a new dictatorship replacing the old one."

More reasons not to invade Iraq and the documentation for the above information can be found at www.cooperativeresearch.org