

TOP TEN REASONS WHY THE US SHOULD NOT INVADE IRAQ

The White House is planning to launch a war against Iraq. Yet there has been no convincing explanation of why a war is needed. The international community is virtually unanimous in its opposition to an attack on Iraq, leaving the United States without allies. A full-scale war against Iraq would isolate the US from the rest of the world, undermine the effort against terrorism, and senselessly kill tens of thousands of civilians. The Bush Administration is determined to initiate an illegal and ill-considered invasion. We the people must be just as determined to stop a war that threatens to tear the world apart.

1) There Is No Justification for Going to War

What was Iraq's act of aggression against us that justifies war? There has been no attack on the US, no Iraqi threat of war, no Iraqi connection to September 11.

War should be a last recourse of self-defense, a step to be taken only when all other alternatives have been exhausted. What the Bush Administration is planning is an act of aggression, not an act of self-defense. The international coalition that fought the first Gulf War was cemented by the principle that one country cannot invade another without provocation. Now the White House is poised to dismiss the coalition to launch an unprovoked invasion of Iraq. This would violate the US's historic policy against using force preemptively. We should not go to war against a distant country that has not attacked us.

2) Iraq Does Not Pose a Clear and Present Danger

The White House says we should invade Iraq to prevent Saddam Hussein from using weapons of mass destruction. But during the 1990s United Nations weapons inspectors dismantled all of Iraq's major chemical, biological and nuclear weapons facilities and destroyed nearly all of Iraq's weapons and long-range missiles. In terms of conventional arms, Iraq's military is now at one-third of its pre-Gulf War strength. According to Ex-Marine and former UN Weapons Inspector Scott Ritter, Iraq presents "absolutely nothing" of a military

threat. And given Hussein's natural desire for self-preservation, it is highly unlikely he would launch any attack that would result in his destruction. Since deterrence is working, why should the US start a bloody war that would undoubtedly lead to massive human suffering?

3) When It Comes to Invading Iraq, the US Has Zero Allies

All the countries of the Middle East—including Kuwait—are opposed to a war with Iraq. Our allies in Europe think an invasion is foolhardy. Only Great Britain's Tony Blair has offered tepid support for a US attack on Iraq, and his approval is tempered by widespread opposition from the British public and his own Labour Party. An invasion of Iraq would isolate the US from the rest of the world and shatter the principles of international cooperation and mutual defense that are key to US and global security.

4) An Attack on Iraq Would Make Us Less Safe

An isolated US is an unsafe country. Attacking Iraq without provocation will ignite anti-American sentiment around the world, disrupting efforts to weaken terrorist networks. Any attack would also further destabilize a Middle East already inflamed by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While the benefits of invading Iraq are murky, the costs are all-too-clear.

5) An Invasion of Iraq Would Violate International Law

An attack on Iraq would constitute an attack on the Charter of the United Nations, which says that armed force may only be used in self-defense, or with the approval of the UN Security Council. That is what happened during the first Gulf War. Attacking Iraq without Security Council authorization would make the US an international outlaw.

6) Invading Iraq Would Be Difficult, Costly—and Without a Clear Victory

An invasion of Iraq will not be nearly as easy as kicking the Taliban out of Kabul. Although Hussein's army has been weakened, Iraq's forces remain large enough to put up a formidable defense. And it is likely that Iraqi forces will be far more determined to defend Baghdad than they were to defend Kuwait City, dragging US forces into a bloody fight in heavily populated areas. It is estimated that any full-scale invasion will cost as much as \$200 billion. During the first Gulf War, allies like Japan covered 80 percent of the cost. It's doubtful that will happen again, leaving the US taxpayers—already facing renewed budget deficits—to pick up the costs. And even if the US does overthrow Hussein, what next? As the experience in Afghanistan shows, throwing out a government is easier than putting a new one together. An invasion without allies would leave the US to enforce a peace in a chaotic country fractured by ethnic conflicts.

7) A War Would Kill Thousands of People

An assault on Baghdad would result in far more American casualties than the war in Afghanistan. And the toll on Iraqis would be far higher. Preliminary Pentagon estimates say that an invasion of Iraq could lead to the deaths of 10,000 innocent civilians—or approximately ten times the number of people killed during the US bombing of Afghanistan.

8) We Should Not Wage a War for Oil

The Bush Administration says we must invade Iraq because Saddam Hussein has violated UN Security Council resolution, is abusing his own people, and pursuing weapons of mass destruction. Yet the US supports the

nuclear-armed dictator of Pakistan and provides billions of dollars in aid to the governments of Turkey and nuclear-armed Israel, both of which are in violation of multiple UN resolutions. The blatant double standard makes one wonder: What is this war *really* about? The short answer is oil.

Iraq has the largest proven reserves of petroleum after Saudi Arabia, and US oil companies, which exercise immense influence over the current administration, are eager to tap into Iraqi oil. This is wrong. We should not attack people in a far-off country to take their resources.

9) Other Options Besides War Are Available

The best way to stop Iraq from resuming its pursuit of weapons of mass destruction is to restart the UN inspections, which were largely successful. The UN is currently trying to resume inspections, but the Bush Administration is dismissing the effort out of hand. This is foolish. The US should work with the UN to get the inspection program back on track.

10) Opposition to the War Is Growing

Americans know deep down that this impending war makes no sense. According to recent polls, one-third of Americans are against a war with Iraq, and a strong majority thinks no attack should occur unless first approved by Congress.

Our task is to turn the public's latent misgivings into blatant opposition. If the citizens say loud and clear that we don't want a war against Iraq, it will be more difficult for the president to go through with his scheme. We have to educate our fellow citizens about why war with Iraq is wrong, and then hold our elected representatives accountable to the will of the people.

Please call your Congressional Representatives today and tell them you don't want the US to invade Iraq. The Capitol switchboard is 202-224-3121. For information about what you can do to stop the White House's planned war against Iraq, contact Global Exchange at 1-800-497-1994 or peace@globalexchange.org, or visit our website at www.globalexchange.org.