



# US and Iraq

*It's time to build a future we can all live with*

Imagine a world in which any nation may make war on another without provocation. This is a world in which nations do not cooperate with each other and in which international law is simply an empty promise. A United States invasion of Iraq brings us much closer to this world. It threatens the lives of hundreds of thousands of civilians and is likely to strengthen anti-American sentiment in the Middle East, cultivating a larger terrorist threat.

And why? In the words of Donald Kagan, one of the leading intellectuals advocating a more aggressive foreign policy, "We will probably need a major concentration of forces in the Middle East over a long period of time. When we have economic problems it is because we have a disruption in our oil supply. If we have a force in Iraq, there will be no disruption of our oil supplies."

## A Decade of Suffering

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1991 was followed by war with the US and its allies. The 1991 Gulf War resulted in the deaths of over 100,000 Iraqis and destroyed much of the country's civilian infrastructure, like sewage and water treatment facilities.

Since the Gulf War Iraqi civilians have suffered doubly under Saddam Hussein's totalitarian regime and the economic sanctions imposed by the US and United Nations. The United States continued air-strikes against Iraq throughout the 1990s. Due to war, sanctions and ongoing bombing campaigns, as many as one million Iraqi civilians have died from malnutrition and preventable disease. According to UNICEF, these circumstances cause the deaths of over 5,000 Iraqi children every month.

## The US Supported Hussein before the Gulf War

During the Iran-Iraq war, members of the Reagan administration, including then Vice-President George Bush Sr., saw Saddam Hussein's survival as "vital to US efforts to contain the spread of Islamic fundamentalism..." Throughout the 80s the US supplied Iraq with materials and technology that assisted in the development of Iraqi chemical, biological and missile-system programs.

The Reagan administration also provided intelligence to Iraq to assist them in their war against Iran, including targeting information used in chemical weapons attacks against Iranian troops.

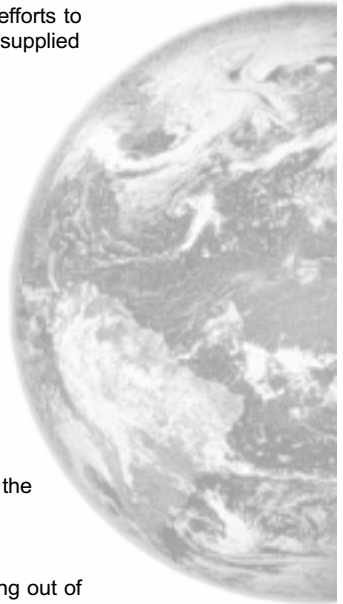
On March 15, 1988 Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons to massacre 5,000 Kurds in Halabja, Iraq. Despite this atrocity, a Senate report concludes that the US continued to ship pathogens to Iraq until November 28, 1989 – over a year and a half after the massacre.

## A Renewed War With Iraq

A new Gulf War could result in massive civilian casualties, especially if the fighting occurs in the densely populated city of Baghdad. A full scale invasion could have devastating environmental repercussions, either due to the destruction of oil production facilities or through the use of chemical and biological agents.

The impending invasion of Iraq also carries the very real possibility of spinning out of control, igniting a larger war in the Middle East. While the governments of neighboring countries such as Jordan may align themselves with the US, popular opinion in those countries is heavily pro-Iraq. If Iraq chooses to attack Israel, the Israeli government has declared it will retaliate, easily turning Gulf War II into World War III.

We must seek a new path in our dealings with Iraq, one that makes every effort to find a diplomatic and peaceful resolution. To do so we must organize American citizens and inspire Congress to provide better principles for America's foreign policy. We can help to better the living conditions of the Iraqi people, but we must do so through international legal systems, weapons inspections, and cooperation.



"The United States could certainly defeat the Iraqi military and destroy Saddam's regime. But it would not be a cakewalk. On the contrary, it undoubtedly would be very expensive – with serious consequences for the U.S. and global economy – and could as well be bloody. In fact, Saddam would be likely to conclude he had nothing left to lose, leading him to unleash whatever weapons of mass destruction he possesses."

**-Brent Scowcroft, National Security Advisor to George H.W. Bush and Gerald Ford**

**Peace Action  
Education Fund**  
1100 Wayne Ave  
Suite 1020  
Silver Spring MD 20910

ph: (301) 565-4050  
fx: (301) 565-0850

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# Campaign for a New Foreign Policy

Our country deserves a break from the failed policies of the past. Our arms sales and military aid programs have created widespread anti-American sentiment. Our nuclear weapons policies are encouraging nuclear proliferation. Our approach to the international community is leading to growing isolation and foreclosing meaningful leadership.

Huge increases in military spending won't make us safer, but they will take funds from education, health care and other programs and harm the quality of life for all Americans. Eliminating civil liberties will threaten our constitution and undermine the very values that

make our nation great. We'll make our country safer by affirming our values, not abandoning them.

## What You Can Do

There may never have been a more important time to speak up and demand change. Call or write your Representative and Senators and tell them you support a fundamental change in US foreign policy. Urge them to support and sign the Pledge for a New Foreign Policy.

To get involved with the Campaign for a New Foreign Policy see Peace Action's web site or contact the local organization below.

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## Three Steps To A Safer World

### 1. Support Human Rights and Democracy

*We should exhibit international leadership by opposing the policies of human rights abusers, not rewarding them with weapons.*

Democracy and human rights are ideals that the American people hold dear. Our elected officials have not held true to these values. Sadly, our country leads the world in providing arms sales and military training to human rights abusing governments and dictatorships. When US weapons are used to prop up governments hated by their own people, bitterness is the result. When we sell weapons world-wide, those arms end up being used against our own troops.

### 2. Reduce the Threat from Weapons of Mass Destruction

*Our nation should lead a worldwide campaign to reduce and control the threat from weapons of mass destruction - a policy we could be proud of.*

We face no greater threat than nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Such weapons are only effective as a means of terror - that can be aimed at us as well as others. The only way to be safe from this threat is to destroy the stockpiles and secure those facilities that make nuclear materials. Instead of leading efforts to secure and dismantle nuclear weapons, the Bush Administration wants to build new ones. In addition, spending billions on a missile defense that won't work while building new nuclear weapons will only speed the pace of nuclear proliferation.

### 3. Cooperate with the World Community

*We should play a positive leadership role in the world community, planning strategies for a future we can all live with.*

The Declaration of Independence urged "a decent respect for the opinions of mankind." Our foreign policy isn't reflecting that core value. Our elected officials have abandoned or blocked a host of international agreements on arms control, human rights, the environment, and the International Criminal Court. Instead of promoting "pre-emptive strikes," the US needs to promote policies that address the larger needs of the world community and that minimize the potential for hate and anger. The US has the strength and ability to better the working and living conditions of human kind, and to increase our own security in the process - but only if we lead through cooperation.

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