

Why We Oppose, and Will Continue to Oppose, This War

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This war is not about ridding the world of an evil dictator. Saddam Hussein is in fact an evil dictator, but we knew that when we brought him to power! All along he has eliminated political opponents and tortured prisoners, yet we considered him an ally. We knew he was using poison gas in the Iran-Iraq war because we supplied the weapons. We continued to supply him with chemical weapons even after he used gas against the Kurds in Halabja. Given our support for Saddam Hussein through the worst of his misdeeds, the claim that we are removing him because he is evil is simply not credible.

This is also not "a war to disarm Iraq." The whole "weapons of mass destruction" issue is a PR measure to sell the war to the American public. Look at the Federation of American Scientists web site (www.fas.org) for an inventory of all the countries that have these weapons in abundance. Many of the countries on the list have dictatorial leaders and records of human rights abuse, yet we are not pushing to invade them. Iraq's military strength was greatly exaggerated to rouse support for the first Gulf war. Whatever military strength Iraq had then was reduced drastically during that war and twelve years of sanctions and inspections. (The inspectors destroyed more weapons than the first Gulf war!) The rest of the world opposes this war because they recognize Iraq is no longer a serious threat.

What really motivates this war is oil, money, and power. We are killing the people of Iraq and destroying their livelihoods for our own material gain. Thus we conclude: this war is immoral and illegal.

You don't have to be a pacifist to see that this war is immoral. Killing for power or profit is murder. Only defensive war is morally acceptable under the guidelines of the "Just War" doctrine. This war does not qualify. We have not been attacked by Iraq. We are the aggressors.

Besides being immoral this war is illegal. International law is still in its infancy, but treaties and conventions have established rules for the conduct of war and the recognition of certain acts as war crimes. When the US signs a treaty it becomes part of US law, according to our own constitution. International law recognizes only two justifications for war: defense against aggression, or authorization by the UN Security Council. "Regime Change," and "Preemption" are not justifications going to war. We should be leaders in strengthening the rule of law, but instead, the United States is acting as a rogue nation.

Finally, we must confront the charge that it is alright to protest the war before it starts, but once it starts we have an obligation to fall in line and "support our troops." The war is every bit as immoral and illegal now as the prospect of war was before it started. It is

true that US troops are in harm's way, but these troops are being used to deprive thousands of Iraqi men, women, and children of their lives and livelihood. We are citizens of this nation, but we are no less citizens of the world. We cannot just "root for our team." An Iraqi life is as valuable in the eyes of God as an American life. Any form of patriotism that denies this fundamental tenant is idolatrous worship of the state.

We do support all the human beings caught up in this war on all sides, whether or not they wear a uniform. We should support the people currently being used as troops by bringing them home, acknowledging the damage done to their minds and bodies, and providing them with the health care and benefits they deserve; something our leaders of recent years have shirked.

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