

Selected Documents Related to the War in Iraq

Directions: Read each document, and summarize each one in your own words.

Document 1

President George W. Bush, State of the Union Address (January 29, 2002)

Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax and nerve gas and nuclear weapons for over a decade.

This is a regime that has already used poison gas to murder thousands of its own citizens, leaving the bodies of mothers huddled over their dead children. This is a regime that agreed to international inspections then kicked out the inspectors. This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world.

States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic.¹

Document 2

President Bush, National Address on the Five-Year Anniversary of 9/11 (September 11, 2006)

On September the 11th, we learned that America must confront threats before they reach our shores, whether those threats come from terrorist networks or terrorist states. I'm often asked why we're in Iraq when Saddam Hussein was not responsible for the 9/11 attacks. The answer is that the regime of Saddam Hussein was a clear threat. My administration, the Congress, and the United Nations saw the threat—and after 9/11, Saddam's regime posed a risk that the world could not afford to take. The world is safer because Saddam Hussein is no longer in power. And now the challenge is to help the Iraqi people build a democracy that fulfills the dreams of the nearly 12 million Iraqis who came out to vote in free elections last December.²

Document 3

Senator Robert Byrd, Speech in Senate (September 26, 2002)

In the event of a war with Iraq, might the United States be facing the possibility of reaping what it has sown? The role that the U.S. may have played in helping Iraq to pursue biological warfare in the 1980s should serve as a strong warning to the president that policy decisions regarding Iraq today could have far reaching ramifications on the Middle East and on the United States in the future.

In the 1980s, the Ayatollah Khomeini was America's sworn enemy, and the U.S. government courted Saddam Hussein in an effort to undermine the Ayatollah and Iran. Today, Saddam Hussein is America's biggest enemy, and the U.S. is said to be making overtures to Iran. The Bush administration is also discussing whether to arm groups of ethnic dissidents, such as the Kurds, in Iraq.

¹"Text of President Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address," *The Washington Post*, <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/onpolitics/transcripts/sov012902.htm>> (28 July 2010).

²"George W. Bush: Address to the Nation on the Five-Year Anniversary of 9/11," *American Rhetoric*, <<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wariniraq/gwbush911after5years.htm>> (28 July 2010).

Could the U.S. be laying the groundwork for a brutal civil war in Iraq? Could this proposed policy change precipitate a deadly border conflict between the Kurds and Turkey?

Decisions involving war and peace, should never be rushed or muscled through in haste. Our founding fathers understood that, and wisely vested in the Congress, not the president, the power to declare war.³

Document 4

President George W. Bush, State of the Union Address (January 28, 2003)

Our nation and the world must learn the lessons of the Korean Peninsula and not allow an even greater threat to rise up in Iraq. A brutal dictator, with a history of reckless aggression, with ties to terrorism, with great potential wealth will not be permitted to dominate a vital region and threaten the United States.

Twelve years ago, Saddam Hussein faced the prospect of being the last casualty in a war he had started and lost. To spare himself, he agreed to disarm of all weapons of mass destruction.

For the next 12 years, he systematically violated that agreement. He pursued chemical, biological and nuclear weapons even while inspectors were in his country.

Nothing to date has restrained him from his pursuit of these weapons: not economic sanctions, not isolation from the civilized world, not even cruise missile strikes on his military facilities.

Almost three months ago, the United Nations Security Council gave Saddam Hussein his final chance to disarm. He has shown instead utter contempt for the United Nations and for the opinion of the world.

The 108 U.N. inspectors were sent to conduct—were not sent to conduct a scavenger hunt for hidden materials across a country the size of California. The job of the inspectors is to verify that Iraq's regime is disarming.

It is up to Iraq to show exactly where it is hiding its banned weapons, lay those weapons out for the world to see and destroy them as directed. Nothing like this has happened.

The United Nations concluded in 1999 that Saddam Hussein had biological weapons materials sufficient to produce over 25,000 liters of anthrax; enough doses to kill several million people. He hasn't accounted for that material. He has given no evidence that he has destroyed it. The United Nations concluded that Saddam Hussein had materials sufficient to produce more than 38,000 liters of botulinum toxin; enough to subject millions of people to death by respiratory failure. He hasn't accounted for that material. He's given no evidence that he has destroyed it.

Our intelligence officials estimate that Saddam Hussein had the materials to produce as much as 500 tons of sarin, mustard and VX nerve agent. In such quantities, these chemical agents could also kill untold thousands. He's not accounted for these materials. He has given no evidence that he has destroyed them. U.S. intelligence indicates that Saddam Hussein had upwards of 30,000 munitions capable of delivering chemical agents. Inspectors recently turned up 16 of them, despite Iraq's recent declaration denying their existence. Saddam Hussein has not accounted for the remaining 29,984 of these prohibited munitions. He has given no evidence that he has destroyed them.

From three Iraqi defectors we know that Iraq, in the late 1990s, had several mobile biological weapons labs. These are designed to produce germ warfare agents and can be moved from place to a place to evade inspectors. Saddam Hussein has not disclosed these facilities. He has given no evidence that he has destroyed them.⁴

³Robert Byrd Speech in the Senate, *Spartacus*, <<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USAByr.htm>> (28 July 2010).

⁴Text of President Bush's 2003 State of the Union Address, *The Washington Post*, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/onpolitics/transcripts/bushtext_012803.html> (28 July 2010)

Document 5

Statement from Saddam Hussein (February 4, 2003)

There is only one truth and therefore I tell you as I have said on many occasions before that Iraq has no weapons of mass destruction whatsoever. . . .

If the purpose was to make sure that Iraq is free of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons then they can do that. These weapons do not come in small pills that you can hide in your pocket.

These are weapons of mass destruction and it is easy to work out if Iraq has them or not. We have said many times before and we say it again today that Iraq is free of such weapons.⁵

Document 6

John Brady Kiesling, Letter of Resignation from the Foreign Service of the United States (February 24, 2003)

The policies we are now asked to advance are incompatible not only with American values but also with American interests. Our fervent pursuit of war with Iraq is driving us to squander the international legitimacy that has been America's most potent weapon of both offense and defense since the days of Woodrow Wilson. We have begun to dismantle the largest and most effective web of international relationships the world has ever known. Our current course will bring instability and danger, not security.

The sacrifice of global interests to domestic politics and to bureaucratic self-interest is nothing new, and it is certainly not a uniquely American problem. Still, we have not seen such systematic distortion of intelligence, such systematic manipulation of American opinion, since the war in Vietnam. The September 11 tragedy left us stronger than before, rallying around us a vast international coalition to cooperate for the first time in a systematic way against the threat of terrorism. But rather than take credit for those successes and build on them, this Administration has chosen to make terrorism a domestic political tool, enlisting a scattered and largely defeated Al Qaeda as its bureaucratic ally. We spread disproportionate terror and confusion in the public mind, arbitrarily linking the unrelated problems of terrorism and Iraq. The result, and perhaps the motive, is to justify a vast misallocation of shrinking public wealth to the military and to weaken the safeguards that protect American citizens from the heavy hand of government. September 11 did not do as much damage to the fabric of American society as we seem determined to do to ourselves. Is the Russia of the late Romanovs really our model, a selfish, superstitious empire thrashing toward self-destruction in the name of a doomed status quo?⁶

Document 7

Michael Livingston, "What Next for the U.S. and European Antiwar Movements?" (Summer 2003)

The European antiwar movement organized demonstrations that brought millions of people into the streets before the start of the invasion of Iraq. Now that the invasion is over and we have entered a phase of increasing resistance to the Anglo-American occupation, what will the movement do? Trying to find an answer to this question, I attended a talk organized by the Social Forum of Segovia (Spain) on Wednesday, June 25.

⁵"Did Saddam Hussein Have Weapons of Mass Destruction after the First Gulf War?" *ProCon.org*, <<http://usiraq.procon.org/view.answers.php?questionID=000897>> (28 July 2010).

⁶"Letter of Resignation," *John Brady Kiesling*, <http://www.bradykiesling.com/resignation_letter.htm> (28 July 2010).

Social Forums exist throughout Europe and are the backbone of the global justice movement in the European Union (EU). The Social Forum of Segovia was one of the main organizers of the largest demonstration in Segovia's history. In February, in conjunction with demonstrations around the world, 12,000 marched through the streets of Segovia, a town of 55,000. At the same time in Madrid, some 70 miles away, more than one million marched. (Madrid's population is approximately 5 million according to the most recent census.) In Barcelona, almost 2 million marched that same day. Approximately one out of every five Spaniards demonstrated. Public opinion polls showed between 80% and 90% opposition to the war. Demonstrations took place in hundreds of other Spanish cities and in the rest of Europe and the world, including the U.S.⁷

Document 8

Stephen Kinzer, "Catastrophic Success" (2006)

Just 122 American lost their lives in the three weeks between March 20, 2003, when the invasion of Iraq began, and April 9, when Saddam [Hussein]'s regime collapsed. Bush apparently believed that these would be the only casualties the United States would have to sustain. In the next two years, however, insurgents killed nearly 2,000 more Americans. Many times that number of Iraqis dies. No end to the conflict was in sight. . . .

The other shock that awaited Americans after they deposed [President Hussein] was that he had, in fact, been telling the truth when he claimed not to have any biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons. An American team called the Iraq Survey Group spent ten months scouring Iraq in search of these weapons, or factories where they might have been produced, but found nothing. When its work was complete, David Kay, who had been its chief inspector, returned to Washington and told the Senate Armed Services Committee that it was "important to acknowledge failure."⁸

Document 9

Howard Zinn, "The Coming End of the Iraq War" (2007)

Our military presence in Iraq is making us less safe, not more so. It is inflaming people in the Middle East, and thereby magnifying the danger of terrorism. Far from fighting "there rather than here," as President Bush has claimed, the occupation increases the chance that enraged infiltrators will strike us here at home.⁹

Document 10

Noam Chomsky, *Interventions* (2007)

Last year (2002) a task force chaired by Gary Hart and Warren Rudman prepared a report for the Council of Foreign Relations, "America—Still Unprepared, Still in Danger." It warns of likely terrorist attacks that could be far worse than 9/11, including possible use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in this country, dangers that become "more urgent by the prospect of the United States' going to war with Iraq. . . .

Today the administration doesn't seem to be heeding the international relief agency warnings about an attack's horrendous aftermath.¹⁰

⁷"What Next for the U.S. and European Antiwar Movement?" *Labor Standard*, <http://www.laborstandard.org/Iraq/Michael_antiwar.htm> (28 July 2010).

⁸Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006), 311–12.

⁹Howard Zinn, *A Power Government Cannot Suppress* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2007), 184.

¹⁰Noam Chomsky, *Interventions* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2007), 15–16.