

TOP TEN REASONS NOT TO INVADE IRAQ

The White House is set to launch a war against Iraq. Yet there has been no convincing explanation of why a war is needed, and the international community is strongly opposed to a US attack on Iraq. A war against Iraq would isolate the US from the rest of the world, undermine the effort against terrorism, and kill tens of thousands of civilians. This is a war that will 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 self-defense.

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 weapons factories and destroyed nearly all of Iraq's chemical and biological weapons and long-range missiles. According to Ex-Marine and former UN Weapons Inspector Scott Ritter, Iraq presents "absolutely nothing" of a military threat. Since deterrence is working, why should the US start a war that would lead to massive human suffering?

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

The international community supports sending weapons inspectors to Iraq to disarm Saddam Hussein's regime, but it does not support the White House's goal of "regime change." An invasion of Iraq would isolate the US and shatter the principles of international cooperation 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. While the benefits of invading Iraq are murky, the costs are all-too-clear.

5) A Costly Invasion Would Take Resources Away from Much Needed Priorities at Home

It is estimated that any full-scale invasion of Iraq will cost up to \$200 billion. During the first Gulf War, allies

like Japan covered 80 percent of the cost. This won't happen again. Instead of spending \$200 billion on an unnecessary war, we should be investing in our nation's overcrowded schools and failing health care system.

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

An invasion of Iraq will not be as easy as kicking the Taliban out of Kabul. And if the US does overthrow Hussein, what next? An invasion without allies would leave the US to enforce a peace in a 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 terrible—an invasion of Iraq could lead to the deaths of 80,000 innocent civilians.

8) We Should Not Wage a War for Oil

The Bush Administration says we must invade Iraq because Saddam Hussein is abusing his own people and pursuing weapons of mass destruction. Yet at the same time the US supports the nuclear-armed dictator of Pakistan. The double standard makes one wonder: What is this war really about? The short answer is oil. We should not attack people in a far-off country to take their resources.

9) Other Options Besides War Are Available

When North Korea announced that it was close to constructing a nuclear weapon, the Bush Administration didn't threaten war—instead, it started cooperating with our allies in Asia to defuse the situation. The North Korean experience shows a way of dealing with weapons of mass destruction and proves that negotiations are preferable to war.

10) Opposition to the War Is Growing

Americans know deep down that this war makes no sense. 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.

TEN THINGS YOU CAN DO TO STOP THE WAR ON IRAQ

- 1. CALL OR FAX** the White House to express your opposition to an invasion of Iraq. The United States Congress has voted for going to war with Iraq—failing in its duty to represent a deeply divided American public. But there are still ways to stop this invasion. Contact the White House at 202-456-1111 (tel) or 202-456-2461 (fax).
- 2. JOIN** the national mobilization to stop the war on Iraq by organizing an anti-war event (a rally, march, vigil, teach-in, or other action) in your community. Make sure to list your event on the website www.unitedforpeace.org. United for Peace also has plenty of exciting action ideas and tips.
- 3. WRITE** a letter to the editor of your local newspaper saying why you oppose the war on Iraq. Your letter should be from one to three paragraphs long. Possible points to make include: the Administration has not presented an adequate justification for going to war; Iraq does not pose a clear and present danger to the US; and an invasion of Iraq would violate international law. You can find out where to send your letters by looking on the letters to the editor page of your local newspaper.
- 4. EMAIL** a friend and ask them to join you in opposing the war. Send this list of things you can do to stop the war to a friend along with a copy of Global Exchange's Top Ten Reasons Why the US Should Not Invade Iraq, available online at www.globalexchange.org.
- 5. DISTRIBUTE** flyers about why people should stop this war before it starts. Good, heavily trafficked locations include bus stops, subway stations, grocery stores, college campuses, libraries, and churches, among other sites. For a sample flyer, go to www.unitedforpeace.org or call us at 415-255-7296.
- 6. ORGANIZE** a weekly vigil against the war at the US federal building in your city, at the office of a Congressperson who supports the war, or at another public place.
- 7. CALL** a press conference where local community leaders, religious leaders, veterans, politicians, and others can speak out against the war. Once you have some community leaders who are willing to speak out against the war, determine the time and location of the press conference, send a press release to local media outlets, and then follow up with a phone call to tell editors and reporters what you're doing.
- 8. EDUCATE** yourself about Iraq and the US accusations against Saddam Hussein so you can discuss the issue with friends, family, and even strangers. We won't be able to stop this war if we can't convince people who don't agree with us to come over to our position. Websites that have good information include www.zmag.org, www.thenation.com, www.commondreams.org, www.alternet.org, www.pacificnews.org and www.endthewar.org.
- 9. PLACE** a "No War on Iraq" banner in a prominent public place. Even if the banner is taken down within a few hours, people will see it while it's up, and they will realize that the opposition to this war is growing. You can hang banners from freeway overpasses and out the windows of buildings in downtown areas. It's easy to make a banner: just use paint or markers on a white sheet.
- 10. CONNECT** with the local peace group in your community. They will undoubtedly have other ideas for how you can work to stop the war. Some peace groups that have chapters in many cities and towns include Peace Action and the American Friends Service Committee. You can also look at the events section on the United for Peace website, and see what groups are sponsoring events in your community. Or join Global Exchange's moderated email listserve by sending a message to nomoreinnocentvictims-on@globalexchange.org.