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The war in Iraq, seven years later

August 31, 2010 at 2:57 pm by [Tim Neff, timesunion.com](#)

Today (Aug. 31), more than seven years after the March 2003 start of Operation Iraq Freedom, the U.S. combat role in Iraq officially comes to an end. [President Obama is scheduled to address the nation tonight at 8 p.m. EDT to talk about what this means.](#)

No doubt, it's a major milestone, but the story of post-Saddam Iraq is still being written. Violence continues to roil Iraq, and nearly 50,000 U.S. troops will remain in the country to act as advisers for security forces. Continuing instability there likely will weigh on Israeli and Palestinian peace talks, [as this AP article explains.](#)

It will be many more years before those who write history books will be able to assess the wisdom of U.S. military intervention in Iraq. At this point, certain facts are relevant to any debate about the war: More than 4,400 U.S. troops killed and hundreds of billions spent ([more than \\$740 billion as of the start of 2010](#)). Other facets of the war are more difficult to weigh: a dictator deposed and a fragile democracy taking shape in the heart of the Middle East. [ProCon.org](#) offers an in-depth look at the pros and cons of the Iraq war. Looking back on all that has happened in the past seven years, do you think the U.S. did the right thing by launching Operation Iraq Freedom? Would you support that decision today?

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- over 4,400 American troops killed; Over 100,000 estimated Iraqi civilians killed (shock and awe; hundreds of billions of dollars spent and no answer from the Bush Administration or Congress as to why. Don't want to use weapons of mass destruction theory anymore? Using that ideology, when are Iran and North Korean wars going to start?

Why did we go to Iraq, kill thousands upon thousands of civilians and essentially destroy the country? Please answer this question, anyone.

My answer is simple in two parts:

- 1) OIL
- 2) Rebuilding Iraq – aka Defense contractors. Take a look at the companies that won the contracts and their relationships with our political representation. You might find some interesting trends.

Comment by sawitcoming — August 31st, 2010 @ 3:26 pm

- definetly worth it. We were able to build many new schools, roads, and bridges as well as provide thousands of jobs in a country that needed our help to succeed.

Comment by frank rizzo — August 31st, 2010 @ 4:29 pm

- I wonder why the people who chose to commit fraud to forment the invasion and occupation of Iraq haven't been indicted, arrested, arraigned, tried, and if found guilty sentenced to prison?

Comment by Mike Lieman — August 31st, 2010 @ 4:37 pm

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The war in Iraq, seven years later (8)

[mmcdonald](#): I agree Mike Lieman, where is the prosecution of those "food for oil" crooks. Where is that Iraqi...

[Milo](#): By the way notice the way Obama is able to divert attention away from the 49 American soldiers that died in...

[Milo](#): This is the same Obama that was strongly opposed to the surge that brought victory in Iraq. He is also taking...

Obama backs mosque plan (95)

[mmcdonald](#): Although I am against the Eminent Domain decision the supreme court ruled on that states a property can be...

[SS](#): So if you are against the building the mosque near Ground Zero, you are an "inbred..."

[A](#): The Muslim community has a constitutional right to build the mosque there. I would be very upset to see them...

On the clock in the emergency room (15)

[Lorie](#): Sorry that was cut my head open.

[Lorie](#): When I was in High School I cut my hear open playing softball. After bleeding out of my head for 2 hours in...

[Logan](#): I don't know eddie s. Conservatives had control of congress from 1995 -1997 and control of the...

Not enough space at SPAC? (44)

[Mike Lieman](#): We never had these problems BEFORE LiveNation weaseled their way in, did we?

[Rich](#): Live Nation really does stink with its high prices, poor management, and lack of enforcement, but the behavior...

The deadly job of bomb disposal (10)

[Lisa S](#): EOD Mike...THANK YOU for your service!!! Eddie S, Mike is right...my son is also an Army EOD Team...

[jakester](#): They should simply use captured terrorists who made them defuse them... or shoot them with a tank...

[Kevin the Sheepdog](#): EOD is one hell of a job. We had an EOD team attached to us in 04 while in Iraq. Ran many a...

4. If we are pulling our troops out, why are we still sending them over (my stepson just arrived in Kuwait)? Also, what will happen to our economy when these thousands of troops come back and need jobs when our unemployment rate is already so high?

Comment by Tray — August 31st, 2010 @ 4:56 pm

5. Yes – who are all those people who said Saddam had WMD?

“One way or the other, we are determined to deny Iraq the capacity to develop weapons of mass destruction and the missiles to deliver them. That is our bottom line.”

–President Bill Clinton, Feb. 4, 1998

“If Saddam rejects peace and we have to use force, our purpose is clear. We want to seriously diminish the threat posed by Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction program.”

–President Bill Clinton, Feb. 17, 1998

“Iraq is a long way from [here], but what happens there matters a great deal here. For the risks that the leaders of a rogue state will use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons against us or our allies is the greatest security threat we face.”

–Madeline Albright, Feb 18, 1998

“He will use those weapons of mass destruction again, as he has ten times since 1983.”

–Sandy Berger, Clinton National Security Adviser, Feb, 18, 1998

“[W]e urge you, after consulting with Congress, and consistent with the U.S. Constitution and laws, to take necessary actions (including, if appropriate, air and missile strikes on suspect Iraqi sites) to respond effectively to the threat posed by Iraq’s refusal to end its weapons of mass destruction programs.”

Letter to President Clinton, signed by:

– Democratic Senators Carl Levin, Tom Daschle, John Kerry, and others, Oct. 9, 1998

“Saddam Hussein has been engaged in the development of weapons of mass destruction technology which is a threat to countries in the region and he has made a mockery of the weapons inspection process.”

–Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D, CA), Dec. 16, 1998

“Hussein has ... chosen to spend his money on building weapons of mass destruction and palaces for his cronies.”

– Madeline Albright, Clinton Secretary of State, Nov. 10, 1999

“There is no doubt that ... Saddam Hussein has reinvigorated his weapons programs. Reports indicate that biological, chemical and nuclear programs continue apace and may be back to pre-Gulf War status. In addition, Saddam continues to redefine delivery systems and is doubtless using the cover of a licit missile program to develop longer-range missiles that will threaten the United States and our allies.”

Letter to President Bush, Signed by:

– Sen. Bob Graham (D, FL), and others, Dec 5, 2001

“We begin with the common belief that Saddam Hussein is a tyrant and a threat to the peace and stability of the region. He has ignored the mandate of the United Nations and is building weapons of mass destruction and the means of delivering them.”

– Sen. Carl Levin (D, MI), Sept. 19, 2002

“We know that he has stored secret supplies of biological and chemical weapons throughout his country.”

– Al Gore, Sept. 23, 2002

“Iraq’s search for weapons of mass destruction has proven impossible to deter and we should assume that it will continue for as long as Saddam is in power.”

– Al Gore, Sept. 23, 2002

“We have known for many years that Saddam Hussein is seeking and developing weapons of mass destruction.”

– Sen. Ted Kennedy (D, MA), Sept. 27, 2002

“The last UN weapons inspectors left Iraq in October of 1998. We are confident that Saddam Hussein retains some stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons, and that he has since embarked on a crash course to build up his chemical and biological warfare capabilities. Intelligence reports indicate that he is seeking nuclear weapons...”

– Sen. Robert Byrd (D, WV), Oct. 3, 2002

“I will be voting to give the President of the United States the authority to use force — if necessary — to disarm Saddam Hussein because I believe that a deadly arsenal of weapons of mass destruction in his hands is a real and grave threat to our security.”

– Sen. John F. Kerry (D, MA), Oct. 9, 2002

“There is unmistakable evidence that Saddam Hussein is working aggressively to develop nuclear weapons and will likely have nuclear weapons within the next five years ... We also should remember we have always underestimated the progress Saddam has made in development of weapons of mass destruction.”

– Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D, WV), Oct 10, 2002

“He has systematically violated, over the course of the past 11 years, every significant UN resolution that has demanded that he disarm and destroy his chemical and biological weapons, and any nuclear capacity. This he has refused to do”

Out 'sick' and speaking for money (71)

Laurie L: Why so many would stand up for someone who falsifies time records is beyond me. If he were an honorable...

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– Rep. Henry Waxman (D, CA), Oct. 10, 2002

“In the four years since the inspectors left, intelligence reports show that Saddam Hussein has worked to rebuild his chemical and biological weapons stock, his missile delivery capability, and his nuclear program. He has also given aid, comfort, and sanctuary to terrorists, including al Qaeda members ... It is clear, however, that if left unchecked, Saddam Hussein will continue to increase his capacity to wage biological and chemical warfare, and will keep trying to develop nuclear weapons.”

– Sen. Hillary Clinton (D, NY), Oct 10, 2002

“We are in possession of what I think to be compelling evidence that Saddam Hussein has, and has had for a number of years, a developing capacity for the production and storage of weapons of mass destruction.”

– Sen. Bob Graham (D, FL), Dec. 8, 2002

“Without question, we need to disarm Saddam Hussein. He is a brutal, murderous dictator, leading an oppressive regime ... He presents a particularly grievous threat because he is so consistently prone to miscalculation ... And now he is miscalculating America’s response to his continued deceit and his consistent grasp for weapons of mass destruction ... So the threat of Saddam Hussein with weapons of mass destruction is real...”

– Sen. John F. Kerry (D, MA), Jan. 23, 2003

Comment by Milo — September 1st, 2010 @ 7:11 am

6. This is the same Obama that was strongly opposed to the surge that brought victory in Iraq. He is also taking credit for removing the combat troops when all along it was a published part of the plan George Bush and the military laid out while Obama, Biden, Reid, and Pelosi were bad mouthing the plan. Remember, Biden wanted to divide Iraq into three parts. Former President George W. Bush is the leader that brought about the victory in Iraq through his leadership of brave American men and women fighting there. He had the vision to see that a free Iraq in the heart of the middle east would eventually bring down the dictators in the surrounding countries. History will bear that out. Obama is a failure at everything he does, except self promotion.

Comment by Milo — September 1st, 2010 @ 7:13 am

7. By the way notice the way Obama is able to divert attention away from the 49 American soldiers that died in Afghanistan this month.

Now he is taking credit for success in Iraq brought about by strategies that he was opposed to.

Comment by Milo — September 1st, 2010 @ 7:15 am

8. I agree Mike Lieman, where is the prosecution of those “food for oil” crooks. Where is that Iraqi oil I keep hearing about? Must be the Oil is just like the WMD’s, Saddam lied about that too (even though both existed)

I think everyone can agree, it’s no coincidence, 2 of the 3 countries of the axis of evil are now developing nuclear weapons. Of course, we could have just bombed Iraq resulting in more civilian casualties less American casualties, but we went about it more humanely.

Comment by mmcdonald — September 1st, 2010 @ 9:44 am

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