

**Q: Why are veterans, active duty, and National Guard men and women opposed to the war in Iraq?**

**A: Here are 10 reasons we oppose this war:**

**1. The Iraq war is based on lies and deception.**

The Bush Administration planned for an attack against Iraq before September 11th, 2001. They used the false pretense of an imminent nuclear, chemical and biological weapons threat to deceive Congress into rationalizing this unnecessary conflict. They hide our casualties of war by banning the filming of our fallen's caskets when they arrive home, and when they refuse to allow the media into Walter Reed Hospital and other Veterans Administration facilities which are overflowing with maimed and traumatized veterans.

For further reading: [www.motherjones.com/bush\\_war\\_timeline/index.html](http://www.motherjones.com/bush_war_timeline/index.html)

**2. The Iraq war violates international law.**

The United States assaulted and occupied Iraq without the consent of the UN Security Council. In doing so they violated the same body of laws they accused Iraq of breaching.

For further reading:

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/imt/proc/imtconst.htm>

<http://www.westpointgradsagainsthewar.org/>

**3. Corporate profiteering is driving the war in Iraq.**

From privately contracted soldiers and linguists to no-bid reconstruction contracts and multinational oil negotiations, those who benefit the most in this conflict are those who suffer the least. The United States has chosen a path that directly contradicts President Eisenhower's farewell warning regarding the military industrial complex. As long as those in power are not held accountable, they will continue...

For further reading:

<http://www.commondreams.org/headlines04/0714-01.htm>

<http://www.publicintegrity.org/wow/>

**4. Overwhelming civilian casualties are a daily occurrence in Iraq.**

Despite attempts in training and technological sophistication, large-scale civilian death is both a direct and indirect result of United States aggression in Iraq. Even the most conservative estimates of Iraqi civilian deaths number over 100,000. Currently over 100 civilians die every day in Baghdad alone.

For further reading:

<http://www.nomorevictims.org/>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/Story/0,2763,1338749,00.html>

<http://select.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F70A1EF73C5A0C758DDDA10894DE404482>

**5. Soldiers have the right to refuse illegal war.**

All in service to this country swear an oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, both foreign and domestic. However, they are prosecuted if they object to serve in a war they see as illegal under our Constitution. As such, our brothers and sisters are paying the price for political incompetence, forced to fight in a war instead of having been sufficiently trained to carry out the task of nation-building.

For further reading:

<http://thankyoult.live.radicaldesigns.org/content/view/172/>

[http://youtube.com/watch?v=Qa6ZHYcG\\_EM](http://youtube.com/watch?v=Qa6ZHYcG_EM)

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=1dAXQeH7y9g&mode=related&search=>

<http://girights.objector.org>

**6. Service members are facing serious health consequences due to our Government's negligence.**

Many of our troops have already been deployed to Iraq for two, three, and even four tours of duty averaging eleven months each. Combat stress, exhaustion, and bearing witness to the horrors of war contribute to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a serious set of symptoms that can lead to depression, illness, violent behavior, and even suicide. Additionally, depleted uranium, Lariam, insufficient body armor and infectious diseases are just a few of the health risks which accompany an immorally planned and incompetently executed war. Finally, upon a soldier's release, the Veterans Administration is far too under-funded to fully deal with the magnitude of veterans in need.

For further reading:

<http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/>

<http://www.vets4vets.us/>

**7. The war in Iraq is tearing our families apart.**

The use of stop-loss on active duty troops and the unnecessarily lengthy and repeat active tours by Guard and Reserve troops place enough strain on our military families, even without being forced to sacrifice their loved ones for this ongoing political experiment in the Middle East.

For further reading: [http://www.military.com/NewsContent/0,13319,FL\\_loss\\_092704,00.html](http://www.military.com/NewsContent/0,13319,FL_loss_092704,00.html)

**8. The Iraq war is robbing us of funding sorely needed here at home.**

\$5.8 billion per month is spent on a war which could have aided the victims of Hurricane Katrina, gone to impoverished schools, the construction of hospitals and health care systems, tax cut initiatives, and a host of domestic programs that have all been gutted in the wake of the war in Iraq.

For further reading:

<http://www.costofwar.com>

**9. The military uses racism and discrimination as tools.**

In order to recruit for the Iraq War, the most vulnerable minority and social groups in the United States are preyed upon to be used as cannon fodder. Once inside the military, they are subject to racism, sexism including harassment and assault, homophobia, and religious intolerance. When at war, the troops are taught to dehumanize the people of Iraq as an enemy with intolerance and racist epithets.

For further reading:

<http://www.cair-net.org/default.asp?Page=articleView&id=1338&theType=NR>

<http://glenngreenwald.blogspot.com/2006/08/fear-mongering-leads-to-anti-arab.html>

**10. Today's youth face aggressive recruitment tactics that don't tell the whole story.**

Popular perception of the military as an "all-volunteer force" hides the fact that our future troops are aggressively recruited from our lowest income neighborhoods. Economically conscripted, the poor and socially vulnerable young are bought with the lies of discipline, education and civilian job training to carry out the wishes of powerful political individuals who are far from war's true horror.

For further reading:

[http://presstelegram.com/news/ci\\_4181091](http://presstelegram.com/news/ci_4181091)[http://news.pacificnews.org/news/view\\_article.html?article\\_id=52249302ccbe366889f3258d46e2eabd](http://news.pacificnews.org/news/view_article.html?article_id=52249302ccbe366889f3258d46e2eabd)

**Q: Why do Iraq Veterans Against the War call for the immediate withdrawal from Iraq?**

**A: There are several reasons why immediate withdrawal is the critical first step toward solving the problems in Iraq.**

**1. The reasons and rationale given for the invasion were fraudulent.**

There were no Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq during the time of the invasion according to US officials and former chief UN weapons inspector Hans Blix. The idea that Al Qaeda and the 9/11 terrorist attacks were connected to Saddam Hussein and the Baath party were proven false in the 9/11 Commission Report. Members of the Bush Administration have admitted that they “misspoke” in the run up to the war.

**2. The presence of the US military is not preventing sectarian violence.**

The US occupation of Iraq has proven to be unable to prevent sectarian violence and halt an escalation towards a civil war. Despite having an average of 140,000 troops in country since the occupation began, internal violence and attacks against civilians and Iraqi security forces have been on a steady incline.

**3. The occupation is a primary motivation for the insurgency and global religious extremism.**

The insurgency can be broken down into many individually named factions with various goals, beliefs, and techniques. However, our membership of veterans believe that the occupation of Iraq is the primary thing encouraging the insurgency and giving it legitimacy in the eyes of many Iraqis. Likewise, other people of the Islamic faith are encouraged to resist America’s policies internationally based on how they perceive our military operations in the Middle East.

**4. We can no longer afford to fight this war of choice.**

The financial burden is destroying our domestic programs that could be used to protect us from natural disasters, provide medical programs, or help improve education. We are jeopardizing the US economy and putting strains on the budgets of important government agencies like the Veterans Affairs Department.

**5. National security is compromised.**

Funds that could be used to protect our ports and transportation are being stripped away while our National Guard units are on constant deployments instead of being used to protect and defend us here at home.

**6. The world is becoming more dangerous.**

International terrorist attacks have increased and it has become more dangerous for Americans to travel abroad. Approval for US policy has decreased and the dislike of Americans has increased.

**7. Our national “moral authority” is being undermined.**

The US has lost credibility to much of the world as the defender of liberty and freedom and our national identity is eroding. We can no longer deploy our armed forces for peace keeping measures with the good faith of the international community. We need to regain the respect and faith of the global community. This begins by withdrawing our troops from Iraq and helping the Iraqi people rebuild their country and society.

**8. The majority of American citizens, Iraqi citizens and US military would like to see an immediate end to the war in Iraq.**

If we are truly a democracy and we aim to create a democracy in Iraq our leaders will represent the will of the citizens and lead according to their wishes.

**9. The military is broken.**

We are abusing the small population of armed service members with multiple deployments while using inadequate vehicles and equipment. Less than one half of a percent of the American population is serving in the active armed forces, which is the least amount in the last century. Only 25% of the troops in Iraq are there for their first tour, while 50% are there on their second tour, and the remaining 25% are there three times or more. We continue to involuntarily extend soldiers with Stop-Loss, recall them repeatedly for additional service using the Individual Ready Reserve, and send soldiers with diagnosed medical problems into combat.