

Questions That Won't Be Asked About Iraq

by Representative Ron Paul

U.S. House of Representatives

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Soon we hope to have hearings on the pending war with Iraq. I am concerned there are some questions that won't be asked -- and maybe will not even be allowed to be asked. Here are some questions I would like answered by those who are urging us to start this war.

1. Is it not true that the reason we did not bomb the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War was because we knew they *could* retaliate?
2. Is it not also true that we are willing to bomb Iraq now because we know it *cannot* retaliate -- which just confirms that there is *no real threat*?
3. Is it not true that those who argue that even *with* inspections we cannot be sure that Hussein might be hiding weapons, at the same time imply that we can be more sure that weapons exist *in the absence* of inspections?
4. Is it not true that the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency was able to complete its yearly verification mission to Iraq just this year with Iraqi cooperation?
5. Is it not true that the intelligence community has been unable to develop a case tying Iraq to global terrorism at all, much less the attacks on the United States last year? Does anyone remember that 15 of the 19 hijackers came from Saudi Arabia and that none came from Iraq?
6. Was former CIA counter-terrorism chief Vincent Cannistraro wrong when he recently said there is no confirmed evidence of Iraq's links to terrorism?
7. Is it not true that the CIA has concluded there is no evidence that a Prague meeting between 9/11 hijacker Atta and Iraqi intelligence took place?
8. Is it not true that northern Iraq, where the administration claimed al-Qaeda were hiding out, is in the control of our "allies," the Kurds?
9. Is it not true that the vast majority of al-Qaeda leaders who escaped appear to have safely made their way to Pakistan, another of our so-called allies?
10. Has anyone noticed that Afghanistan is rapidly sinking into total chaos, with bombings and assassinations becoming daily occurrences; and that according to a recent UN report the al-Qaeda "is, by all accounts, alive and well and poised to strike again, how, when, and where it chooses."

11. Why are we taking precious military and intelligence resources away from tracking down those who did attack the United States -- and who may again attack the United States -- and using them to invade countries that have not attacked the United States?
12. Would an attack on Iraq not just confirm the Arab world's worst suspicions about the US, and isn't this what bin Laden wanted?
13. How can Hussein be compared to Hitler when he has no navy or air force, and now has an army one-fifth the size of twelve years ago, which even then proved totally inept at defending the country?
14. Is it not true that the constitutional power to declare war is exclusively that of the Congress? Should presidents, contrary to the Constitution, allow Congress to concur only when pressured by public opinion? Are presidents permitted to rely on the UN for permission to go to war?
15. Are you aware of a Pentagon report studying charges that thousands of Kurds in one village were gassed by the Iraqis, which found no conclusive evidence that Iraq was responsible, that Iran occupied the very city involved, and that evidence indicated the type of gas used was more likely controlled by Iran not Iraq?
16. Is it not true that anywhere between 100,000 and 300,000 US soldiers have suffered from Persian Gulf War syndrome from the first Gulf War, and that thousands may have died?
17. Are we prepared for possibly thousands of American casualties in a war against a country that does not have the capacity to attack the United States?
18. Are we willing to bear the economic burden of a 100 billion dollar war against Iraq, with oil prices expected to skyrocket and further rattle an already shaky American economy? How about an estimated 30 years occupation of Iraq that some have deemed necessary to "build democracy" there?
19. Iraq's alleged violations of UN resolutions are given as reason to initiate an attack, yet is it not true that hundreds of UN Resolutions have been ignored by various countries without penalty?
20. Did former President Bush not cite the UN Resolution of 1990 as the reason he could *not* march into Baghdad, while supporters of a new attack assert that it is the very reason we *can* march into Baghdad?
21. Is it not true that, contrary to current claims, the no-fly zones were set up by Britain and the United States without specific approval from the United Nations?
22. If we claim membership in the international community and conform to its rules only when it pleases us, does this not serve to undermine our position, directing animosity toward us by both friend and foe?

23. How can our declared goal of bringing democracy to Iraq be believable when we prop up dictators throughout the Middle East and support military tyrants like Musharaf in Pakistan, who overthrew a democratically-elected president?
24. Are you familiar with the 1994 Senate Hearings that revealed the U.S. knowingly supplied chemical and biological materials to Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war and as late as 1992 -- including *after* the alleged Iraqi gas attack on a Kurdish village?
25. Did we not assist Saddam Hussein's rise to power by supporting and encouraging his invasion of Iran? Is it honest to criticize Saddam now for his invasion of Iran, which at the time we actively supported?
26. Is it not true that preventive war is synonymous with an act of aggression, and has never been considered a moral or legitimate US policy?
27. Why do the oil company executives strongly support this war if oil is not the real reason we plan to take over Iraq?
28. Why is it that those who never wore a uniform and are confident that they won't have to personally fight this war are more anxious for this war than our generals?
29. What is the moral argument for attacking a nation that has not initiated aggression against us, and could not if it wanted?
30. Where does the Constitution grant us permission to wage war for any reason other than self-defense?
31. Is it not true that a war against Iraq rejects the sentiments of the time-honored Treaty of Westphalia, nearly 400 years ago, that countries should never go into another for the purpose of regime change?
32. Is it not true that the more civilized a society is, the less likely disagreements will be settled by war?
33. Is it not true that since World War II Congress has not declared war and -- not coincidentally -- we have not since then had a clear-cut victory?
34. Is it not true that Pakistan, especially through its intelligence services, was an active supporter and key organizer of the Taliban?
35. Why don't those who want war bring a formal declaration of war resolution to the floor of Congress?

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