

What is the significance of the Iraq war?



All you foreigners better have freedom and democracy, or else!



About Iraq:

Iraq is a country in the heart of the Middle East, which until 2003 had been run for 29 years by Saddam Hussein by 2003. He was a **Sunni Muslim (20% of Iraq's population)** who ran the country as a dictator, known to oppress any opposition from the **Shi'a Muslim groups located in Eastern Iraq (60% population)** and the **Kurdish groups (20%) located in the North of Iraq**. Saddam's rule was supported by the only legal political party, the **Ba'ath Party**, who controlled the entire country's politics, economy and public services like the army and the police. This made sure that the Sunnis had the advantage whilst the Shi'as and Kurds had fewer rights. Saddam was known for using chemical weapons against his own people and against their neighbours, Iran. This had led **America into one previous war with Iraq which ended in 1991 with Iraq giving up their weapons and signing U.N resolution 687** (see inside). However, after the terror attack of 9/11, suspicions of Saddam were high. Oh yeah... Iraq is also an oil rich country. Find the details within!



13. Why did the multinational force invade Iraq in 2003?

When considering the causes of the Iraq war you must remember that it is a complex issue and, even at GCSE level, it is difficult to examine the FULL story. Therefore, we shall focus on 5 of the most common reasons why the USA and Britain invaded Iraq.



WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction)

The UN believed that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction (nuclear long range missiles) at their disposal which could be a huge danger to the US and UK if they were used aggressively. Having these weapons under the control of a leader like Saddam Hussein made this even more dangerous, as he was known for committing large human rights violations against both his own people and those in other countries like Iran. His supposed possession of WMDs was never proven.

Oil

The Middle East (including Iraq) has 5 of the 6 largest oil reserves in the world in the countries of Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. Iraq contains about **10% of the oil left in the world today** (as of 2016), a similar figure to 2003. We live in a day and age where oil is one of the most valuable products in the world and is used for many reasons including the petrol/diesel supplies used in transport. Many western countries were low on supplies in 2003. One popular theory is that the USA and UK invaded and took control of the oil drilling and refining facilities during the war before giving them back Iraqi government in return for very cheap oil prices on a long term basis. This is supported by the fact that **David Miliband (UK Foreign Secretary at the time)** signed a contract with the Kurds (in the North of Iraq) during the British withdrawal in 2008 to guarantee almost **3 decades of cheap oil** for the UK.

Links to Al-Qaeda

When 9/11 took place, the USA first accused Saddam and thought he may have been working with Al-Qaeda and believed that this would only make the WMDs even more dangerous if they fell into the hands of Osama Binladen (the world's most wanted man at the time!). After the USA and UK invaded Afghanistan in 2001, **they believed that Saddam Hussein had allowed Al-Qaeda to move their training camps into Iraq**. As both governments needed to appear strong in the fight against terror, did not want any further terrorist attacks against their people, they saw this as another reason to take action. It was later found that Saddam had no ties to Al-Qaeda.

Saddam's Human Rights record

Saddam committed many atrocities against the people of Iraq, for both religious and nationalistic reasons. Examples include the **Halabja poison gas attack against the Shi'as (5000 dead)**, the **Dujail massacre against the Shia's (147 dead)** and the **Al-Anfal campaign against the Kurds(over 50,000 dead)**. Many people died in these attacks and the rest of the world, including the U.N believed that this was a terrible violation of the Iraqi peoples' human rights. A just cause? But is it the main reason?

Spread Democracy

Iraq was a dictatorship led by Saddam Hussein. Many people in Iraq did not agree with how he ran things, particularly the Shi'as and Kurds who were often persecuted and even killed. The USA and UK are democracies and wanted to spread that system to Iraq, supposedly for the benefit of the Iraqi people. This said, after the invasion had taken place, many regard Saddam's rule as being more successful than the aftermath of the American invasion.

Summary: However you examine this issue, it appears that these causes can be categorised in a few different ways. Causes where the US and UK stand to gain something, those which create fear amongst the population in the UK and US and those causes which would make people feel like the Iraqi people would benefit from outside help (moral reasons)

14. Was the invasion legal? Why was there opposition to the invasion in so many countries?

Legality and Opposition:

15th Feb 2003: Mass protests take place around the world in cities like Rome, London and in some Arab countries protests were arranged by the government. Over 8 million people protested worldwide.

How the U.S.A and UK justified the war

The U.N passed **UN Resolution 687** after the USA defeated Iraq in the Gulf War of 1991. The resolution said that Iraq had to declare and eliminate their weapons of mass destruction otherwise the "**use of force**" against them would then become legal. Saddam presented a report to the U.N which outlined how he had done this. The USA/UK and U.N were satisfied at this time (1991) that he had disposed of his WMDs. However, this all changed after 9/11. The USA and UK both believed that Saddam had WMDs again and were worried he would supply Al-Qaeda.

The USA/UK wrote and presented the U.N with **UN Resolution 1441 in 2001**. It said that if Iraq did not comply with Resolution 687 then a further inspection could take place. All 15 countries in the UNSC (United Nations Security Council) voted in support of this law. This was followed by an UNWIT (United Nations Weapons Inspection Team), led by Hans Blix, searching Iraq for weapons. They found none.

The USA and UK ignored these findings, the votes from the UN and invaded anyway by justifying it in their own way. Both of the ways they justified it were technically legal, but were also going against the rules of the United Nations and countless international laws. **Kofi Annan** (General Secretary of the U.N spoke out against the invasion.

In summary, although the invasion was considered technically legal by some, it was considered technically illegal by others at the time. Either way, it can now be considered illegal due to no WMDs.



The UK Government stated that Iraq had not complied with Resolution 687 (despite the UNWIT report stating otherwise!) and said that the '**use of force**' was necessary



The USA used an old international law relating to the idea of **pre-emptive self defence**, the idea that you should strike the threat first before they strike you. This later became known as the '**Bush Doctrine**'.

Reasons for opposition and protests before the war:

- There was no firm evidence of WMDs in Iraq by the time of the invasion and countries in the UN who opposed invasion said that **Hans Blix** should have been given more time (China, France and Russia)
- Concern for Iraqi civilians: People knew that there would be many deaths in Iraq if an invasion went ahead

Reasons for opposition and protests after the war:

- This war could be viewed as a distraction and drain of funds which could damage the war against terror.
- The planning by the US and UK military was poor and mistakes were made with troop numbers and equipment. **Paul Wolfowitz** (US Secretary of Defence 2001-2005) had even admitted this.

15. How/why was the invasion completed so quickly?

Reasons why the invasion was decided on so quickly:	
American government gives the go ahead (Oct 2002)	In October 2002 American congress and the senate passed a law in America which allowed Bush to begin preparing for an invasion of Iraq and start beginning preparations with the U.N
The UN say go looking for weapons (Nov 2002)	Before this was allowed to happen, Bush had to approach the UNSC for approval. The US and UK wrote and submitted Resolution 1441 for passing by the UN. This resolution allowed an inspection by UNWIT (led by Hans Blix) to visit suspected weapons sites. The UNSC voted 15-0 in favour of this.
No weapons found, UN block USA and UK (March 2003)	In addition to this the US/UK tried to pass another resolution which would have allowed the invasion of Iraq, but the UNSC rejected it because France, China and Russia (3 of the 5 permanent members of the UNSC) used their power of Veto to block it (veto means that if one of the 5 disagrees, then no action can be taken). Jacques Chirac , president of France, was the most outspoken against the invasion, as they had found no evidence of a threat to America.
USA and UK defy UN and invade anyway (16 th March 2003)	The US and UK did not agree and, on , they gave Iraq 1 day to show evidence that they had disarmed. Iraq provided nothing and the invasion began with a multinational force including the USA (130,000 troops), UK (45000 troops), Spain (Jose Maria Aznar was the leader at the time), Romania and a selection of other smaller countries who agreed with the USA and UK.

Reasons the invasion was over so quickly:	
Strength of US and UK military 	They had air superiority , having destroyed most of Iraq's key military bases and airfields before troops even set foot on the ground. This stopped Iraqi mobilisation . Also the US/UK had superior weapons technology on the ground. This included devices like satellite imagery/tracking, IED detectors, night vision, homing missiles, the latest guns, aircraft, naval and ground machinery.
Iraqi military weakness:	Iraq had been under economic sanctions during the 1990s, meaning that other countries did not trade with them and they became poorer because of it. As a result they could only buy older weaponry by buying out dated technology from countries like Russia and Turkey . This meant that even basic units like tanks were over 20 years out of date.
Poor morale in Iraqi forces: 	Even before the invasion began the Iraqi armed forces and police force knew they stood no chance of victory and, as a result of this, there are reports of entire units in Iraqi army and police force simply evaporating into the crowds of civilians when the invasion began. This meant that the 500,000 strong (estimated 350,000 in regular army and 26,000 in the SRG (Special Republican Guard) and various police forces)) now either abandoned their cause or joined Insurgent groups, many of which later became associated with ISIS (when they appeared in 2014).
Poor leadership: 	They were not prepared because Saddam believed that the USA/UK would not invade a sovereign country which was protected under UN law and had no evidence of WMDs found by UNWIT (makes sense—yeah?). In addition to this, some leaders within the army were members of Saddam's family, such as Qusay Hussein (his son) who was in charge of the Special Republican Guard (above). Saddam had chosen people who he knew would be loyal to him rather than those with the most military skill. This meant that they struggled to defend a number of positions they considered 'strong holds' during the 40 day invasion , particularly around the areas of Mosul, Baghdad, Fallujah and Basra..

16. What were the consequences of the invasion and how much of a success was it? (ST/LT and +/-) - Part 1

Consequence	Description and explanation	Who was affected?
Insurgency	Insurgency is any violent uprising against a government by its own people (in this case an Interim (temporary) Government set up by the Americans). The fact the Sunni minority (20%) now felt they were under represented led to many of Saddam's ex-police and ex-army men fighting back against the Americans and UK. They used bombings, IEDs, intimidation, spying and suicide attacks , often in places like busy marketplaces or diplomatic/political headquarters. There is evidence that some Shi'a militia groups and Islamists from other organisations such as Al-Qaeda helped the insurgents! Civilians were often caught in the crossfire. Over 10,000 soldiers from the multinational forces have died in Iraq, most due to insurgency.	Multinational forces Iraqi civilians Families largely in the USA/UK
Counter-insurgency	As a result, counter insurgency operations took place. The aim of these operations was to capture key materials, weapons and people who pose a threat to the new Government. Many hundreds of plots have been stopped through the CIA using spies to infiltrate groups which hate the Americans. This is how they captured Saddam Hussein (who was later hanged by the new Government for his crimes). However, this links to the section on the next page about human rights abuses by the UK/USA, as some civilians were wrongly tortured.	Iraqi insurgents Iraqi Civilians
Breakdown in law and order	When the invasion was taking place law and order broke down quickly, there was looting (including hospitals!), robbery of houses, multiple murders and cases of rape taking place in key cities such as Basra and Baghdad. It was so dangerous that the UN relief agency refused to send aid into effected areas. Many normal Iraqis were heavily affected by this and blamed the USA and UK for creating the situation. As a result of this it is thought that over 500,000 Iraqi children died due to disease, lack of medication, violence and lack of food/clean water between 2003 and 2010.	All Iraqis The reputation of the USA/UK

How much can we blame the policies and actions of the USA for the breakdown in law and order after the invasion?	
USA	Iraqis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul Wolfowitz admitted that the follow up plan for the invasion wasn't good enough • The USA damaged or destroyed a lot of power, road and other key infrastructure during the invasion and took a long time to replace it • They put a interim/transitional government in place without understanding the tensions between different groups • Arming Sunni, Shi'a, Kurd and Al-Qaeda groups to police the streets in CLCs (Concerned Local Citizen) groups • Used American companies to rebuilt Iraq and charged a fortune to the Iraqi government for this. Many disliked this. <p>They also raised resentment and hatred amongst the Iraqi population by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Killing civilians with bombs and through using Blackwater (Private security firm) • Taking over oil production before anything else and keeping control of it for years • Mistreatment of civilians in custody 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saddam's police force and army disappeared because they didn't know what the Americans would do to them and were loyal to Saddam. This left the population without law temporarily. • The tensions between Sunni, Shia and Kurds was always going to be a problem after Saddam died. • May Iraqis who disliked the Americans caused problems through murdering those who helped Americans (translators etc) and causing disruption to normal life. • High unemployment meant some turned to crime.

16. What were the consequences of the invasion and how much of a success was it? (ST/LT and +/-) - Part 2

Consequence	Description and explanation	Who was affected?
Human rights abuses by the Multinational forces	There are many instances where forces from the USA and UK have abused the human rights of Iraqi military prisoners and civilians. Examples include: torture, rape and murder. One of the most famous examples is the case of 22 year old Private Lynndie England and Specialist Charles Graner of the U.S army , who were both sentenced to 10 years in prison for dragging around a naked prisoner using a dog lead and forcing him to do things to other prisoners.	Iraqi civilians And insurgents U.S and U.K military per- sonnel
Oil Production	Oil production was damaged. The war caused a short term drop in the supply of oil , resulting in higher prices for oil for other countries around the world between 2003 and 2015. As there was a huge shortage, other countries and companies began expanding their oil production by drilling in new locations and using fracking . This has led to an oversupply in oil at the end of 2015 and the price of oil in 2015-16 has fallen by over 50% (the long term) .	The entire world Middle East in particular
Damage in reputation of the USA and UK:	Both the USA and UK have lost the trust of their own people on decisions of war. Now voters look back at the Bush/Blair governments as warmongers . The USA/UK have burnt relationships with some countries in the Middle East by invading Iraq. This had led to an anti-West mood . The U.N approach America less on issues relating to war and there has been a shift in the balance of power within the U.N, involving more of Russia and China's influence .	The entire world The USA/UK and their in- fluence global- ly
Everyday life for the Iraqi people	There has been both positive and negative change for people in Iraq. Life now involves living with machine gun fire, roadside bombs etc . The death toll is now well over 1 million . Freedom and some civil liberties did improve for Iraqi women. As of December 2005 68 women were elected into a council , where previously they were not allowed, however, the entire political system in Iraq has now been shaken by ISIS	Iraqi people Women American sol- diers
Increase in terrorism and decline in security in the US/UK and other Westernised countries	The Iraq war took attention and resources from the threat posed by Al-Qaeda , leaving room for terror attacks like Madrid (2004) and London (7/7/2005). Many now believe the Iraq War has increased the membership of Al-Qaeda . This war has also given birth to (caused) the terrorist group ISIS , because it is now understood that the commanders in Saddam's ex police force and army are the people leading this terror group, along with other extremist Muslims who do not like the Western influence in Iraq and the Middle East.	The Middle East European countries at- tacked USA
The 'Arab Spring'	The introduction of democracy in Iraq had an impact on neighbouring countries like Saudi Arabia which, in 2005, held its first elections to choose half of the new council members in Riyadh. In 2005-6 there were signs of revolution and democracy spreading in countries like Syria, Egypt, Libya and Tunisia (the Arab Spring). However, as 2012 arrived, so did a LOT of trouble in these countries. Now, in 2015-16 Syria, Libya, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon are in civil war and millions are fleeing to Europe . This is causing global tensions to run high.	The Middle East Iraqi people World

IRAQ: TOP 19 QUIZ (because 10 was too few)

1. List the 5 main causes of the Iraq war.
2. Give 2 statistics about oil
3. Which 3 attacks on the Iraqi people have given Saddam Hussein a poor human rights record?
4. Who was the leader of UNWIT at the time of the war?
5. What did resolution 687 say
6. Who is Paul Wolfowitz?
7. How did the U.S justify their invasion?
8. What is the UNSC and what was their vote on U.N resolution 1441?
9. What did resolution 1441 say and how did the UK use this to justify their invasion?
10. How does the power of Veto work?
11. Give 2 reasons that opposition to the war in countries around the world used before the war.
12. Give 2 reasons that opposition to the war in countries around the world used after the war.
13. Who is Jack Chiraq, and why is he significant to the Iraq war?
14. Make a flow chart about why the Iraq war was able to start so quickly.
15. Give 4 reasons why it was over so quickly
16. Who is Qusay Hussein?
17. How can the Americans be to blame for a breakdown in law and order after the invasion? (4 reasons)
18. List 7 consequences of the Iraq war and label them internal (for those inside Iraq) and external (international consequences)
19. Make extensive notes on these consequences.

EXAM QUESTIONS: IRAQ WAR

DESCRIBE:

- Describe Saddam Hussein's human rights record. **(4 Marks)**
- Describe the party played by the U.N in the lead up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003 **(4 Marks)**
- Describe the main features of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq **(4 Marks)**

EXPLAIN:

- Explain why there was international opposition to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. **(6 Marks)**
- Explain why Iraq was invaded in 2003. **(6 Marks)**
- Explain why the issue of 'Weapons of Mass destruction' was important in relation to Iraq **(6 Marks)**

EVALUATE:

- How far did the invasion of Iraq benefit the Iraqi people? Explain your answer. **(10 Marks)**
- How far was the invasion of Iraq a success for the USA? Explain your answer. **(10 Marks)**
- 'American policies were to blame for the breakdown in law and order in Iraq after the invasion'
How far do you agree with this statement?
Explain your answer **(10 Marks)**
- The following were **equally important** problems in Iraq between 2003-2005.
1) Iraqi insurgency
2) Human rights abuses by the multinational force
3) The weakness of the Transitional Government
How far do you agree with the above statement? Explain your answer referring only to 1, 2 and 3. **(10 Marks)**