

# U.S. BULLIES IRAQ

## Invasion Plan Revealed

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SPECIAL TO WAR TIMES, [WWW.WAR-TIMES.ORG](http://WWW.WAR-TIMES.ORG)

Since Sept. 11, the Bush administration has escalated its threats to overthrow the Iraqi government of Saddam Hussein. A detailed plan for a U.S. invasion involving 250,000 troops was revealed on July 5.

The plan has not been approved and debate over how to



*U.S.-led economic sanctions cause the death of 5,000 Iraqi children each month.*

eliminate Hussein continues. Some prefer relying on covert operations. The Joint Chiefs of Staff recently voiced opposition to a full-scale invasion, fearing the death of thousands of U.S. soldiers and the possible failure to eliminate Saddam Hussein. European and Arab allies are also opposed.

Throughout the 1980s, Iraq was one of Washington's principal allies in the Persian Gulf. After Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, however, the U.S. launched a devastating war against its former ally. More than 100,000 Iraqis were killed. Iraq's mili-

tary was utterly defeated. A UN inspection team reported that "most means of modern life support have been destroyed."

Since the Gulf War, 12 years of crippling U.S. economic sanctions have caused the death of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. The UN reports that each month 5,000 children under the age of 5 die as a result of the sanctions. U.S. bombings in the so-called "no fly zones" are continuous and further contribute to Iraqi hardship.

### NO WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Before sanctions Iraq reached First World levels of child health, education and general welfare. In 1989 indicators for children's lives in Iraq were so high that UNICEF was about to close its Iraq program as unnecessary. Today Iraq's UNICEF program is the second largest in the world. (See "Smart Sanctions Devastate Iraq.")

So why is the U.S. so determined to attack Iraq?

Weapons of mass destruction?—not very likely. After the Gulf War UN arms inspectors, despite Baghdad's lack of full cooperation, found and destroyed the overwhelming majority of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs during six years of intrusive searches. As early as February 1998, UNSCOM chief Richard Butler reported that his team was satisfied that Iraq no longer possessed any nuclear or long-range missile capability. And he said that UNSCOM was "very close" to completing the chemical and biological inspections.

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*New U.S. plan calls for air, land and sea invasion by 250,000 troops.*

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Do some scraps of chemical or biological material still exist? Very likely—after all, the U.S. authorized shipments of biological seed stock for anthrax, e-coli, botulism and other dread diseases to Baghdad throughout the 1980s. But that doesn't mean there's any capacity to turn those scraps into strategic weapons that could threaten the U.S.

Others argue that, some time in the future, Iraq might rebuild its weapons of mass destruction and might then turn them over to unknown terrorist groups, who might then attack unknown targets. However, this speculative argument hardly justifies a full-scale war on the already devastated Iraqi population. And international law prohibits preemptive wars.

Human rights?—not a chance. The Iraqi regime has always been harsh and repressive. In fact Baghdad's worst violations, the anti-Kurdish campaigns and the use of illegal chemical

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# “SMART SANCTIONS” GUT IRAQ

U.S. economic sanctions, in place since 1990, devastated the people of Iraq while leaving Saddam Hussein in power. Washington’s “smart sanctions” proposal recently passed by the UN Security Council won’t do much to help the existing disastrous situation.

In 1998 the UN reported that about 5,000 children under five were dying every month from the effects of sanctions—water-borne diseases, insufficient medicine, inadequate food. Smart sanctions or dumb, that staggering figure has not changed.

Under the sanctions-based oil for food program, the Iraqi economy remains stalled. Unemployment in some areas is over 70 percent. Iraq can export oil, but all payments are sent to a UN-controlled escrow account. For Iraq to purchase any of the thousands of items on the special “review list” (including such things as cargo trucks), contracts must be approved by a UN committee. Within that committee, the U.S. has veto power over every contract. By the spring of 2002 over \$5 billion worth of contracts were being held up, almost all of them by U.S. decision.

The biggest problem with the economic sanctions is simply there is insufficient money to meet the needs of the Iraqi people. Under the sanctions, only \$21 billion worth of goods arrived in Iraq during the first five years of the oil for food program. This is less than \$200 per Iraqi per year, not enough to provide food, clothing, roads, schools, hospitals, street cleaning, and electricity.

Iraq cannot pump more oil because its drilling infrastructure was destroyed in the war and only partially rebuilt. Without massive investment, prohibited by the sanctions, there is simply no money to rebuild the oil equipment, let alone the water treatment, sewage, electrical generating and other components of once-modern Iraq.

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## ***ACTION IDEAS***

### **SUPPORT PEACE ACTIVISTS FINED FOR SANCTIONS VIOLATION**

Two Seattle activists, who were each fined \$10,000 by the U.S. government for bringing medicine to Iraq in 1997, have refused to pay. In “Declaration 2002,” they again defy the government’s sanctions and aim to raise another \$10,000 for medicines for the Iraqi people. [www.scn.org/ccpi/declaration2002.html](http://www.scn.org/ccpi/declaration2002.html)

### **SIGN THE PEACE PLEDGE**

Sign the Peace Pledge, a public declaration of opposition to the economic and military war against the people of Iraq. [www.peaceresponse.org/pledge/](http://www.peaceresponse.org/pledge/)

### **JOIN THE CAMPAIGN OF CONSCIENCE**

Make a moral commitment to alleviate the human suffering in Iraq and to support shipping humanitarian goods to Iraq

with or without U.S. license. [www.afsc.org/conscience/Default.shtm](http://www.afsc.org/conscience/Default.shtm)

### **IRAQ PEACE TEAM**

Voices in the Wilderness (VITW) has led 43 sanctions-busting delegations to Iraq. It is negotiating with Iraq to place non-violent activists in the country in the face of the U.S. threat. [www.iraqpeaceteam.org](http://www.iraqpeaceteam.org)

### **CONTACT ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Call the President at (202) 456-1111 or your Congressperson at (202) 225-3121. Urge them to create alternatives to the failed policy of renewed war and economic sanctions.

### **HOST AN EVENT ON IRAQ**

The Iraq Speakers Bureau provides 20 expert speakers on the humanitarian crisis in Iraq and current U.S. policy. Call (202) 543-6176 or visit [www.iraqspeakers.org](http://www.iraqspeakers.org)

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### ***U.S. BULLIES IRAQ continued***

weapons, took place during those years of U.S.-Iraqi chumminess. The Iraqi general responsible, now in exile, recalls that the U.S. even provided targeting information for the poison gas attacks.

### **WHY U.S. WAR DRIVE?**

Washington’s drive for “regime change” is more likely motivated by two other factors.

Oil. Iraq is home to the second largest oil reserves in the world. First place Saudi Arabia is increasingly destabilized by the unpopular presence of U.S. troops, along with U.S. support for Israel’s occupation of Palestine, so maintaining control of other major oil sources remains a U.S. priority.

Domestic politics. So much political capital has been invested in “getting Saddam Hussein” that the political risk of advising against military engagement has risen sky-high. Coming out against military strikes threatens anyone with the potentially career-destroying epithet of being “soft on Iraq.”

In the 12 years since Iraq invaded Kuwait, the people of Iraq have lost lives, children, homes, cities, water systems, education and cultural institutions. Sanc-

tions have stripped them of the right to work, the right to travel, to study and to learn. A further attack now, whether by full-scale invasion or covert actions, threatens to further undermine the lives of already desperate Iraqi civilians.

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