

## Bush Foreign Policy Assignment

### Iraq Resolution Assignment

#### United States & Iraq Timeline

1980s — The United States supported Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War.

1990 — August 2: Under President Saddam Hussein, Iraq invaded Kuwait.

1991 — January 17 – February 28: A military coalition led by the U.S. drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. The coalition did not attempt to remove Hussein from power.

1991 — April: United Nations Security Council established a commission to conduct inspections to ensure that Iraq destroyed all chemical and biological weapons and long-range missiles.

1998 — October 31: President Bill Clinton signed the Iraq Liberation Act, which made it the policy of the U.S. to support the removal of Hussein's regime.

1998 — December 16-19: In response to Iraqi interference with UN weapons inspectors, the U.S. and the U.K. bombed Iraq.

2001 — September 11: Hijacked planes crashed into the World Trade Center in New York, the Pentagon (headquarters of the U.S. military), and a field in Pennsylvania. 2,996 people were killed during the attack.

2002 — January 29: During his State of the Union address, President George W. Bush referred to Iraq as part of an "axis of evil" and stated, "The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons." In the following months, President Bush's administration began to push for military action to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Bush argued that not only might Hussein use the WMDs, he might also give them to terrorists. He frequently referenced the terrorist attacks of 9/11 as a reason for action against Iraq.

2002 — September 26: Senator Tom Daschle, Democrat from South Dakota, and Senator Trent Lott, Republican from Mississippi, introduced a resolution, based on a White House proposal, to authorize the use of force in Iraq.

2002 — October 16: President Bush signed the resolution into law after it was approved by the House (on October 10) and the Senate (on October 11).

2003 — A coalition force led by the U.S. invaded Iraq.

2011 — U.S. forces withdrew from Iraq. 4,486 U.S. soldiers died during the war. Estimates of Iraqi deaths range from approximately 100,000 to more than 500,000. WMDs were never found in Iraq.

#### Document A: Senator Clinton

If left unchecked, Saddam Hussein will continue to increase his capability to wage biological and chemical warfare and will keep trying to develop nuclear weapons. . . . The question is how do we do our best to both defuse the threat Saddam Hussein poses to his people, the region, including Israel, and the United States, and at the same time, work to maximize our international support and strengthen the United Nations. . . . I believe the best course is to go to the United Nations for a strong resolution that scraps the 1998 restrictions on inspections and calls for complete, unlimited inspections, with

cooperation expected and demanded from Iraq. I know the administration wants more, including an explicit authorization to use force, but we may not be able to secure that now, perhaps even later. . . .

Even though the resolution before the Senate is not as strong as I would like in requiring the diplomatic route first and placing highest priority on a simple, clear requirement for unlimited inspections, I take the President at his word that he will try hard to pass a United Nations resolution and seek to avoid war, if possible. Because bipartisan support for this resolution makes success in the United Nations more likely and war less likely, and because a good faith effort by the United States, even if it fails, will bring more allies and legitimacy to our cause, I have concluded, after careful and serious consideration, that a vote for the resolution best serves the security of our Nation. If we were to defeat this resolution or pass it with only a few Democrats, I am concerned that those who want to pretend this problem will go away with delay will oppose any United Nations resolution calling for unrestricted inspections. . . .

I come to this decision from the perspective of a Senator from New York who has seen all too closely the consequences of last year's terrible attacks on our Nation [on September 11]. In balancing the risks of action versus inaction, I think New Yorkers, who have gone through the fires of hell, may be more attuned to the risk of not acting. I know I am.

So it is with conviction that I support this resolution as being in the best interests of our Nation. A vote for it is not a vote to rush to war; it is a vote that puts awesome responsibility in the hands of our President. And we say to him: Use these powers wisely and as a last resort. And it is a vote that says clearly to Saddam Hussein:

This is your last chance; disarm or be disarmed.

Source: Senator Hillary Clinton, Democrat from New York, October 10, 2002.

Document B: Senator Byrd

38 years ago I, Robert C. Byrd, voted on the Tonkin Gulf Resolution—the resolution that authorized the President to use military force to “repel armed attacks” and “to prevent further Communist aggression” in Southeast Asia. It was this resolution that provided the basis for American involvement in the war in Vietnam. It was the resolution that led to the longest war in American history. It led to the deaths of 58,000 Americans, and 150,000 Americans being wounded in action. . . .

After all that carnage, we began to learn that, in voting for the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, we were basing our votes on bad information. We learned that the claims the administration made on the need for the Tonkin Gulf Resolution were simply not true, and history is repeating itself. . . .

For all those spouting jingoism about going to war with Iraq, about the urgent need for regime change no matter what the cost, about the need to take out the evil dictator—and make no mistakes, I know and understand that Saddam Hussein is an evil dictator—I urge Senators to go down on The Capital Mall and look at the Vietnam memorial. Nearly every day you will find someone at that wall weeping for a loved one, a father, a son, a brother, a friend, whose name is on that wall. . . .

Congress is again being asked to vote on the use of force without hard evidence that the country poses an immediate threat to the national security of the United States. We are being asked to vote on a resolution authorizing the use of force in a hyped up, politically charged atmosphere in an election year. Congress is again being rushed into a judgment.

This is why I stand here today, before this Chamber, and before this Nation, urging, pleading for some sanity, for more time to consider this resolution, for more hard evidence on the need for this resolution. If the need for taking military action against Iraq is so obvious and so needed and so urgent, then why are nearly every one of our allies opposed to it? . . . People are correct to point out that September 11 changed everything. We need to be more careful. We need to build up our intelligence efforts and our homeland security. But do we go around pounding everybody, anybody, who might pose a threat to our security?

Source: Senator Robert Byrd, Democrat from West Virginia, October 10, 2002

Document C: Senator Santorum

I believe President Bush will do everything possible before deciding to commit U.S. military forces against Saddam Hussein's regime. The President has not decided to employ military force, nor does this resolution demand that he do so. Rather, the resolution signals to the President that Congress stands behind his decision to employ military force if Saddam Hussein fails to disarm or abide by all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. . . .

In plain terms, the threat posed by Saddam Hussein is analogous to the threat posed by a drunk driver. The drunk driver is a threat to all on and in close proximity to the road. . . . Saddam is this drunk driver careening along the road, a threat to all those innocents who have the misfortune to cross his path. It is time to get Saddam off the road before he can kill or injure innocents who cross his path. . . .

Looking the other way will not and cannot improve the situation in Iraq and the threat Saddam Hussein poses to the world. There is a parallel between today's situation and the situation that confronted the civilized Western World of the 1930s. In that era, democratic leaders sought to appease the ambitions of Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich. World War II, the Holocaust and millions of military and civilian casualties are the outcome of that deferral of action.

In conclusion, given the events of September 11th, given the past transgressions of Saddam Hussein, and given the threat posed to the world by his weapons of mass destruction programs, it is imperative that we provide President Bush with the strongest hand possible to seek compliance with all applicable U.N. Security Council resolutions. The attacks of September 11th and the fateful decisions not taken in the 1930s illustrate that there is a cost to not taking corrective action in a prompt and decisive fashion.

It is my sincere hope that this resolution will rally the United Nations Security Council to draft a strong resolution forcing the disarmament of Saddam Hussein and his regime of terror. If the U.N. fails to act, the U.S. must do what is in the best interest of our national security interests and disarm Saddam

Hussein. . . . To do or expect anything less is to shirk our moral obligation to meet the national security obligations of our country.

Source: Senator Rick Santorum, Republican from Pennsylvania, October 10, 2002.

Speech	What were reasons to support or oppose the resolution?	What historical events influenced the senator's decision about whether to support the resolution?
Clinton		
Byrd		
Santorum		

### Comparing the War in Iraq to Vietnam

Directions:

Read the following article by Robert Freeman. Then research both wars on your own to decide if you agree or disagree with the statements Freeman makes. Complete the provided handout to help you organize your information. After the handout is completed respond to the writing prompt.

By Robert Freeman

Vietnam: March 29th, 2010 marks the thirty-seventh anniversary of America's withdrawal from Vietnam. You won't hear it celebrated in any mainstream media, though it should be. Or more precisely, it should be mourned. Vietnam is the first war America ever lost.

It should be remembered so that we might learn the lessons of that loss. They are many, they are profound, and they could inform so many of our policy decisions today: that withdrawal from immoral wars doesn't mean the end of civilization as we know it; that even America's seemingly limitless resources are, in fact, limited; that masses of engaged, moral individuals can restrict the reckless, destructive folly of renegade elites.

Perhaps the most important lesson of Vietnam is that policies based on lies will ultimately fail, for in an open society it is the consent of the governed that is required to sustain major policy initiatives. A government can either earn that consent, or it must forfeit the essence of its democracy. If lying becomes its essential method of operating, a nation ceases to be a democracy. Rather, it becomes a criminal conspiracy of self-interested insiders donning the trappings of democracy in order to gull the credulous.

If Vietnam was anything, it was a fetid cesspool of a policy of lies. The intelligence agencies lied about the threat to our country from a nation of pre-industrial age rice farmers who just wanted to be left alone. The Pentagon was steeped in lies, from field level body counts to the success of strategic bombing to the basic question of whether the war could even be won. The State Department lied about the prolonged, illegal bombings of Laos and Cambodia.

Multiple presidents lied about their plans to end the War because none wanted to be the first American president to ever lose a war. Congress lied about our ability to finance both a major foreign war and a Great Society, all without raising taxes. The people lied about the War's essential goodness, all the while shunting off its fighting to a Black and Latino underclass. Once middle class white boys began coming home in body bags, the War ended quickly.

It was this vast and entangled web of lies that, once unmasked in the humiliation of defeat, caused shame among the nation's people and revulsion from the rest of the world. And rightly so. For it is one of the most basic of moral precepts, one of the first lessons that all people of all cultures teach their children, that if you have to lie about something it is wrong. This is so elemental a warning it is enshrined in one of the sacramental narratives of America's founding: George Washington and the cherry tree. "I cannot tell a lie."

The obvious tragedies of Vietnam are that the U.S., the greatest military power in the history of the world, lost its first war to a rag-tag bunch of peasants who believed in the simple truth that it was not their fate to submit to foreign domination; that 58,000 Americans and 3 million Asians were killed; that our application of 21 million gallons of Agent Orange left the country the greatest man-made environmental catastrophe in the history of the world; that it wrecked the U.S. economy; that it gravely damaged America's moral standing in the world; and that it grievously undermined Americans' faith in their own government and, indeed, in themselves.

But all of those tragedies are compounded again and again in the fact that we didn't learn the most important lesson of the War: that when democratic nations found major policies on lies, either those policies will fail when the lies are disclosed, or the nation will forfeit its essential nature and accept its status as a phony, a nation of liars, led by a group of con men playing dress-up for the TV.

Iraq: We are saturated today with lies in number and magnitude easily equal to the lies of Vietnam. In fact, it is difficult to find a major policy arena in the U.S where the essential policy is not based on lies.

The high debt we've run up over the past thirty years was all based on the seductive lie that there would not be a day of reckoning when it would have to be paid back. That lie gave rise to weakening personal greed and devastating cultural excess. Of course, the debt is boldly unsustainable and when the bills come due we will either ruin the currency as they did in Weimar Germany (giving rise to Hitler) or we will surrender title to much of our nation's wealth in favor of the foreigners who have funded our childish, careless binge.

The invasion of Iraq is now a case study in the use of lies to push a nation into an illegal and immoral war. There were no weapons of mass destruction. Saddam Hussein was never involved in 9/11. He had nothing to do with al Qaeda. None of that mattered, and it still doesn't matter seven years later, today. The elites wanted their war because it made them richer by raising the price of oil, increasing the national debt, and inducing an orgy of weapons-buying. So they lied the country into it. They're still lying but we have become desensitized to it, inured to the degradation it signals for all of us, and so we accept it, mumbling obedient rationalizations in a useless attempt to ease our consciences and comfort our battered dignity.

It is important that we commemorate Vietnam, both to mourn the objective horror of what it was, but also to redeem our capacity to tell the truth, to ourselves, about ourselves. Only in that way can we begin to reclaim the country and the people we want to imagine ourselves to be.

Writing Prompt:

**Do you agree or disagree with the statements Freeman makes in this article comparing the Vietnam War to the War in Iraq. Provide evidence from your research support your answer. (6-8 Sentences)**