

Jake Towne – Iraq War Plank

“The Congress shall have Power... to declare War.” - The Constitution of the United States

“No nation could preserve its freedom in the midst of continual warfare.” - James Madison

As Congressman, I will drive for a rapid immediate and orderly withdrawal from Iraq. Under no circumstances will I approve spending to extend this unconstitutional, preemptive war of aggression. Besides the devaluing the dollar and spending taxpayer funds to fund war during adverse economic times, my justification for the position is the following:

First and foremost, without a declaration of war, the Iraq War is an unconstitutional and illegal war as it conflicts with the Constitution, the supreme law of the land. In dereliction of their duty and oaths of office, the House voted down by unanimous vote a motion in committee to follow the Constitution and declare war in H.R.J. 114, the bill that authorized Bush to invade in March 2003.

Second, we must realize that the Iraq War is a grinding, continuous, 19-year long war. While I condemn Saddam Hussein's dictatorship, one must remember that as recently as 1984 the United States backed the regime and funded both Iraq and Iran (the infamous Iran-Contra Affair) during the blood-soaked Iran-Iraq War from 1980-1988, which saw wide use of chemical weapons such as mustard gas and the nerve agent tabun. In 1994, Senator Riegle's report revealed that America armed Iraq with anthrax, botulinum and many other chemical weapons that were “not attenuated or weakened” and “capable of reproduction.”

The Iraq War can be divided into three phases:

Phase 1: The attack to remove the Saddam Hussein's army from Kuwait took place with broad international support and United Nations approval from 1990-1991. Osama bin Laden, our former-ally-turned-terrorist who disapproved of Hussein's secular (non-religious) rule, even offered to invade with his mujahideen.

Phase 2: From 1992-2002, the Iraqi people suffered under isolating economic sanctions, loss of its airspace to a militarized “no-fly” zone (which never had UN approval and was called “illegal” by the head of the UN), and was repeatedly bombed by the US Air Force. Under Clinton, these instances include the launch of 23 Tomahawk missiles to demolish Intelligence Headquarters in Baghdad in 1993 and a major bombing mission in 1998. Before H.R.J. 114 was even passed, a joint US-UK airstrike involving 100 warplanes was carried out in September 2002 with next-to-no media coverage. Britain's Ministry of Defense alone reported dropping well over 300,000 pounds of ordnance during 2002.

While the bombs dropped, the harsh economic sanctions led by the United States led to starving among the Iraqi people, as the US State Department stated in their 2002 report.

Phase 3: In March 2003, America and a coalition of nations invaded Iraq in violation of their UN charters and the US Constitution without an acts of aggression committed by Iraq. As of October 2009, 4,348 American servicemen and women have died so far in the occupation. The **minimal** number of Iraqi civilian deaths lies between 93,000 to 102,000 per Iraq Body Count. Extrapolations from the study by the medical journal *Lancet* give estimates of 1.2 to 1.3 million civilian deaths from a 2003 population of roughly 25 million. On a percentage basis, this is the rough equivalent of 13 million deaths if the war had took place in America.

The Bush administration gave the following excuses for invading Iraq and occupying it from 2003 to present. First, they said that Iraq supported Al-Qaeda. Second, they said Iraq had “weapons of mass destruction.” These claims were not only false, but were lies.

“We have no evidence that Saddam Hussein was involved with the 11 September attacks.” - President George Bush to US Congress, September 2003

In 2008, a study concluded that the Bush regime publicly made 935 false claims concerning Al-Qaeda's ties to Iraq and weapons of mass destruction with Bush II uttering 260 falsehoods, Secretary Colin Powell 254, and Vice President Dick Cheney 48. Furthermore, while Bush was terrifying the American people of being attacked by Hussein and Bin Laden on a daily basis throughout 2002, in September of 2002 the CIA sheepishly reported that they had not updated the National Intelligence Estimate since 2000 with an assessment of Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons capacities.

This lack of intelligence did not stop Colin Powell from lying to the United Nations Security Council in February 2003 stating he had "solid sources" that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and that his testimony was "not assertions" but instead "facts and conclusions based on solid intelligence."

We should not have the temerity to fool ourselves into believing that garrisons and “police actions” in Iraq are helpful in any way. Think about how many Americans would revolt if a foreign nation were to have garrisons in our country! Iraq belongs to the Iraqis, not to us. Instead of more bombs, bullets, and sanctions, America should offer Iraq peace, honest friendship, and peaceful trade. These can best be obtained by a rapid, immediate, and orderly withdrawal from Iraq.

American troops should **JUST COME HOME**. Even if the annual \$1+ trillion military empire was economically sustainable, there is no rational reason to continue America's style of gunboat diplomacy. WWII and the Korean War ended 60 years ago.

Concerning foreign policy, we must face facts. There has been no real change since Barack Obama took office except for an escalation of the Afghanistan-Pakistan War. Obama has signed the largest war budget in the history of the world, \$680 billion dollars. This bill will increase the size of active-duty combat troops by 40,200 in 2010, inline with Obama's campaign promise to add 92,000 troops.

America today faces a time of maximum danger where continued warring will bleed us dry and bankrupt our treasury. The freedoms our founding fathers died protecting are heavily eroded. But **the dire threat to liberty comes not from cowards living in caves in Pakistan. The dinosaur career politicians in office today represent the true threat.** They are dragging We the People along a path not unlike that of the USSR during the 1980s. The Soviet Union collapsed for two basic reasons – an unsustainable economy ruled by central planners and imperial overstretch.

Conceived in liberty, America is yet a wealthy nation in comparison to the rest of the world, but time runs thin. We must restore the constitutional Republic before it is too late. If we are to have a free and open society, our last & only resort must be to ruthlessly wage peace.

Jake Towne is [running for US Congress](#) in Pennsylvania's 15th District in the 2010 election as a citizen unaffiliated with any political parties. Jake plans to implement a novel “Our Open Office” form of accountable and transparent government when elected to give each resident a public voice. Visit [TowneForCongress.com](#) to learn more. Jake can be reached at TowneForCongress@gmail.com. Jake's full plank with sourcing is available at <http://towneforcongress.com/platform-issues/iraq-war>