

# The u.s. war on iraq

[People](#), [Barack Obama](#)



The U. S. War on Iraq Sam King 12/9/12 Sam King U. S. History 2 Professor Christoforo 12/9/12 When the allied troops returned home after WWII with the enemy vanquished and liberty on the rise, the United States of America entered into its most prolific and expansive years in history and suddenly found themselves at the head of the world table. Times of trouble were resolved with us on the frontlines doing whatever was necessary. Its identity as the land of liberty, the beacon of hope, was established long before but hadn't been exemplified. People read about the glorious days of the Revolution when the common man united to overthrow tyranny and bring freedom to the world in the face of oppression, but those stories were starting to seem a bit dated. When we demonstrated the power of the American will, and fought a two-front war with international super powers to stop the onslaught of fascism and communism we showed the world the true power of a government by the people and for the people. Though logical, it's unfortunate for us that such a tremendous high point had to be followed by an equal low. That respect that our fathers and grandfathers earned us throughout their hard-working lives has all but dried up. For the past eight years the conduct of the United States Government has been laughable to the outside world and downright frightful for those of us within. " In the view of much of the world, the United States has played the role of bully in the school yard, throwing its weight around with little regard for others' interests. "(Global Public Opinion) We have been trying to expand our role as the global police force; all while losing money funding our own troops as well as the insurgents we're fighting. We're making enemies and losing friends at an astonishingly uneven rate. We stripped the credibility of the

United Nations with the invasion of Iraq and exposed our own incompetence with the occupation. We've ignored decades of research on climate change and encouraged energy practices that strengthen our enemies while creating scores of uncertainties for our own future. September 11th exposed a weakness in the system and in a rush of paranoia we tried to rewrite all the laws and eradicate all the terrorists of the world. We encased our embassies in walls of concrete and rather than welcoming visitors; made them walk through a series of security devices and eyed their activities if they looked different than us (Friedman). It's easy to attribute to this shift in attitude to President Bush and the men he assembled to help him run the country, however it is reflective a much greater problem within our society and thus will require a much more comprehensive solution. Most will agree that a reputation is much easier to destroy than it is to restore but that can't be our thinking going into this revival. America's two major problems that have alienated us from the rest of the world are the Kyoto Protocol and our response to the overwhelming evidence supporting man made of climate change, and obviously the Iraq War and the way we've handled ourselves as the global law enforcer. Fortunately for Americans, it seems that the general population has noticed this shift in public opinion around the globe and has started to recognize the changes that will be necessary in response. America has become a population of decent individuals who believe in freedom and justice and for the most part try to do the right thing. Small town America is filled with selfless individuals who aren't looking to get rich and don't see things in terms of finances. They volunteer in their communities and help out those in need. These are the kind of people who return things like wallets

and cell phones when they're found or might tell you if they saw you drop them. The problem is that our Government isn't representative of this attitude and operates on a completely different set of greedy principles. They have adopted the mannerisms of a major multinational conglomerate. Everything is about the bottom line and maximizing profit while minimizing the cost. There is no transparency or accountability in their actions. And above all; everyone is out for themselves. (Friedman) In the glory days of the revolution the founding fathers and the early leaders of the country were completely invested in America and would have done anything to see her through trying times. In today's world where people are trained to cut and run at the first sign of trouble one can hardly imagine any politician with that sort of dedication. It is certainly a far cry from the bribery and embezzlement that President Bush and his associates stayed blissfully ignorant of and allowed to undermine our country. Today we don't make decisions based on how they will better society; instead it is assumed that that is synonymous with improving the economy (Friedman). No matter how dire we seem to only address a countries need if there is a clear, immediate benefit to us. One would hope that was not the mentality that led us into Iraq and the Middle East in general, however after the invasion of Iraq and the downfall of Saddam's regime, mass looting and rioting began to occur all across the country. Despite all the reports, composed by our finest military experts, detailing the number of troops necessary to sustain peace, it was still left to the small invading forces to police the entire country. Needless to say they were completely outnumbered and couldn't stop the schools and museums and armories from being robbed and burned in the chaos. They managed to

steal some of the world's oldest artifacts as well as many of explosives that are now being improvised to kill our soldiers. All that the soldiers were instructed to protect was the oil (No End in Sight). One can see then where this perception that we don't care has come from. A report from the Pew Research centers Global Attitudes program found that " respondents to the 2006 survey in 13 of 15 countries found the American presence in Iraq to be an equal or greater danger to stability in the Middle East than the regime of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad" (Global Public Opinion). Despite the logical threat in the Middle East, we choose the one that might make us some money. Greed accounts for our situation with the climate crisis as well. The oil executives and auto manufactures have known for a long time that increases in awareness would lead to massive decreases in their bottom lines. They employed a massive campaign to keep people in the dark on climate change and do everything to stall any legislature that might actually make mandates to force action. Similar to the propaganda techniques used by the tobacco industry, they paid scientists and other so called experts to discredit the real science being done and write it off as non-sense. Men that then went on to positions on the Presidents energy council or with Exxon Mobiles board of trustees. Many countries now look at the decisions made over the past few decades, particularly by our " best and brightest" and see mistakes that may now jeopardize the rest of the world's future. In places like China, the countries of South America, and really anywhere where agriculture is of central importance, they are already suffering from the changes in seasons and annual rainfalls. While they starve and fight record floods, our politicians and big CEO's can laugh all the way to the bank. It

easy then to see why there is such a blatant anger at us when we allow our elected officials to conduct themselves in such a manner. Changing this greedy mentality that has led us into our military quagmires and global climate crises will not be easy; however it all starts with a leader who inspires the masses. Beyond simply being an eloquent speaker and visionary of the future, President Obama has given the world hope by abandoning the idea of control through fear that the Bush administration has made famous. Their idea was to keep people believing that there was an ever present danger of terrorist attacks and the best thing to do would be continue to put more measures in place examine people and they deemed suspicious (Jost). The fear that gripped the nation and blinded the public gave them the freedom to write whatever laws they wanted or needed. Now Mr. Obama wants to draw his power from the hope and dreams of those same people. To unite them with the promise of a better government that responds to public demands and doesn't dictate them (As Obama Takes Office). " We reject as false the choice between our safety and our ideals..." If he can get America on the fast track to alternative fuels and do everything he can to limit the amount of money we send into the Middle East through our oil and gas purchases we have our best chance or reemergence. (Friedman)To regain the respect we've lost he must show the world that we are ready to lead by example and make changes within before forcing them on others (Jost). Above all he must show the world that we can be tolerant of each and every faith and race across the globe, and freedom and justice aren't particular to white-Anglo Americans. As a multi-cultural individual himself he has already crossed his greatest opposition in achieving that and conveying to the world.

Simply by being elected to the most powerful country in the world he has shown that determination and perseverance can overcome even the most established forms of oppression (As Obama Takes Office). Times of trial often provide the greatest opportunities as well. We again find ourselves on the frontlines of the worlds issues with their entire weight bearing down on us. We have come to a point where reform is our only remaining viable option. We can either unite with our fellow man and sacrifice the things that make us individual to create a better world, or we can sit back upon our riches and wait for our doom. Globalization has eliminated geographically specific problems. The chain of cause and effect now reaches rounds the globe and each day grows more intricate. Being at the top of that chain we have a tremendous opportunity to shake things up and be that catalyst that we so desperately need.