

Gulf war



(HIST 1302) History and Political Science (The Gulf War) 03 June First Section

The 1991 Iraq War is one of the most “misunderstood” wars because there were no clear goals on why the United States went to war in the first place. The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq was viewed by most of ordinary American citizens as something that is quite distant to them in terms not only of geographical distance but of its immediacy in terms of a threat to the nation’s oil supply, threat to Mideast peace and the overall geopolitical balance of power. The US military had done away with the war draft and so it is mainly a volunteer army. As such, it relies usually on people who freely and voluntarily join the military service and the people who enter the military are mostly poor people (the traditional party base of the Democratic Party). The sons and daughters of rich people do not join the military service. It is only the poor kids who join as a way out of poverty, get a sure job and obtain education. In other words, it is the lower social and economic classes which had borne the greatest burden of prosecuting the wars in Iraq in disproportionate numbers compared to the rich classes. However, the main reason why labor unions today are opposed to the Iraq war was it was a war that was not properly explained to them. The original objectives of going into Iraq were hazy at best which was to remove Iraq from Kuwait which is a recognized member of the United Nations as a sovereign nation. But more than that, the ordinary Americans are now more wary of getting involved in other people’s domestic affairs when the American citizens themselves are in deep trouble regarding their own issues about the economy, health care, education and many other concerns such as high crime rates. Americans today do not want to get involved because they had a bad experience with the Vietnam War (Brier 1). Second Section The first Gulf War against Iraq

<https://assignbuster.com/gulf-war-essay-samples/>

back in 1991 is sometimes called as the unfinished war because it failed to topple the regime of Saddam Hussein. At any rate, the United States tried to obtain the United Nations' mandate to go to war against Iraq but basically, it was just a war among two Middle Eastern countries. Other than the geopolitical considerations and concern on the security of oil supplies, the United States entered the war based on doubtful objectives. A known Arab ally like Kuwait asked for the help of the US and so the war was conducted on a limited objective of turning back the Iraqi invasion but not to oust Hussein from power. The second Iraq War which started in 2003 is more on solid ground as the justification for it was to rid Saddam Hussein of his weapons of mass destruction (WMD) but it turned out the military intelligence information was flatly wrong on this one as no WMD were found. It can be seen with the benefit of hindsight that both Iraq Wars (1991 and 2003) were started by an American president on dubious grounds and the net result is that the American public is now disbelieving whenever they are told of the justifications for going to war. In both cases, it turned out the objectives for the war were not clear cut and so what happened is so-called "mission creep" in which military objectives changed often with no end in sight. The domestic consequences of both wars are that the American public is now trending towards isolationism; they do not want America to remain the policeman of the world. There are also more pressing domestic concerns such as the huge budget and trade deficits resulting in a weak US dollar which made imported products and service more expensive. The money spent in the wars could have been spent better elsewhere such as improving education and the health care systems of the country (ibid.). The Vietnam War was seen as a quagmire of a US policy with no clear-cut objectives in

mind; the Iraq War is now viewed as the same situation. The United States is also being drained big financially by these wars with no end in sight. Work Cited Brier, Stephen. “ It’s our Sons and Daughters:” Voices of the New York City Labor Movement in Opposition to the Gulf War. History Matters, 1991. Web. 02 June 2011.