

# Joe Biden Championed the Iraq War. Will that Come Back to Haunt Him Now?

The Iraq war has been a prominent, even decisive issue, in recent US presidential elections. That will make Biden's history a liability

By [Mark Weisbrot](#)

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*Below are relevant excerpts from an important article by Mark Weisbrot originally published in The Guardian in February 2020.*

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When the war was debated and then authorized by the US Congress in 2002, Democrats controlled the Senate and Biden was chair of the Senate committee on foreign relations. Biden himself had enormous influence as chair and argued strongly in favor of the 2002 resolution granting President Bush the authority to invade [Iraq](#).

“I do not believe this is a rush to war,” Biden [said](#) a few days before the vote. “I believe it is a march to peace and security. I believe that failure to overwhelmingly support this resolution is likely to enhance the prospects that war will occur ...”

But he had a power much greater than his own words. He was able to choose all 18 witnesses in the main Senate hearings on Iraq. And he mainly chose people who supported a pro-war position. They argued in favor of “[regime change as the stated US policy](#)” and warned of “[a nuclear-armed Saddam sometime in this decade](#)”. That Iraqis would “[welcome the United States as liberators](#)” And that Iraq “permits known al-Qaida members to live and [move freely](#) about in Iraq” and that “they are [being supported](#)”.

The lies about al-Qaida were perhaps the most transparently obvious of the falsehoods created to justify the Iraq war. As anyone familiar with the subject matter could testify, Saddam Hussein ran a secular government ....

.... But Iraq in 2002 was devastated by economic sanctions, had no weapons of mass destruction, and was known by even the most pro-war experts to have no missiles that could come close to the United States. The idea that this country on the other side of the world posed a security threat to America was more than far-fetched. The idea that the US could simply invade, topple the government, and take over the country without provoking enormous violence was also implausible. It's not clear how anyone with foreign policy experience and expertise could have believed these ideas.

.... Regardless of Biden's intentions – which I make no claim to know or understand – the resolution granting President Bush the authority to start that war, which Biden pushed through the Senate, was a major part of that deception.

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