

War on Iraq: Open letter to John Kerry from Fallujah Veteran

By [Ross Caputi](#)

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thefallujahproject.org

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, USA](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity, US](#)
[NATO War Agenda](#)

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Dear Secretary Kerry,

I am writing to you veteran-to-veteran, man-to-man. However, I have decided to write to you publicly. The issue that I am writing about is too important, too many lives depend on it, and I cannot take the chance that this letter and the linked petition will only reach the eyes of one of your aides.

Like you, I felt betrayed that my country sent me to fight an unjust war, though my war was several decades after yours, and in Iraq. I have spoken out against that war to the best of my ability, as you once did against your war before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In recent years you have found yourself on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, but your attitudes towards war have changed drastically.

You supported the war in Iraq, the war that I was deployed to as a Marine, where I participated in the 2nd siege of Fallujah. You were at the end of your Presidential run during the build up to this operation. The 2nd siege of Fallujah was compared to Hue City for its military character, and to the My Lai Massacre for its moral character. But you supported this operation.

Fallujah is currently under siege once again. You have stated that US troops will not be sent back to Iraq to assist in the current siege, but you have agreed that the US should send weapons to the Iraqi government. I am writing to implore that you do everything within your ability to stop shipments of US weapons to Iraq, whether they are sold, gifted, or loaned. Arming an oppressive regime so that they may better crush a popular uprising is not in the best interest of Americans or Iraqis.

During that 2nd siege of Fallujah [we killed thousands of civilians](#), displaced hundreds of thousands, destroyed nearly the entire city, and brought immeasurable loss and hardship upon those poor people. Since then I have [devoted my life](#) to raising awareness about the suffering I helped create in Fallujah, and to assisting Fallujans in their struggle with a [public health disaster](#) and ongoing repression.

I feel a moral obligation to do whatever is within my power to help these people who I once hurt. But I was not a lone actor in Iraq. I had the support of a nation behind me and I was taking orders from the world's most powerful military. The 2nd siege of Fallujah was not exceptional; rather it was symbolic of our military's conduct in Iraq and the way that our mission impacted the lives of Iraqis. Our war and occupation

took so much from them. It resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths, millions displaced, permanent environmental contamination, and a new repressive regime that most Iraqis regard as begin more brutal than that of Saddam Hussein. This is the legacy of America's involvement in Iraq. The least that we can do at this point is to end our complicity in their suffering.

The current violence in Fallujah has been [misrepresented in the media](#). The Iraqi Ministry of Interior asserted earlier in the month that al Qaeda had taken over half of Fallujah and the media parroted this assertion. However, journalists who have done serious investigations into this assertion found it to be [false](#). The uprising in Fallujah is a popular uprising, not one lead by an international jihadist group. The Iraqi government has not been attacking al Qaeda in Fallujah. Their assault has been indiscriminate, killing dozens of civilians and wounding even more. Many of these [deaths have been documented](#) by human rights organizations within Fallujah.

I know that the US plans to [send further shipments](#) of Apache attack helicopters and Hellfire missiles. If we continue to send weapons to the Iraqi government, we will be further complicit in this violence. Iraqis have long known the Maliki regime to be brutal and repressive. This is not a regime the US should be sending weapons to. Some of your colleagues in Congress have [voiced this same concern](#).

When you spoke before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1971, you spoke with compassion for the Vietnamese people. You sympathized with the suffering that our illegitimate war brought to them. I am asking you to do the same for Iraqis. Please end all shipments of US made weapons to Iraq.

I have attached a petition with [11,610 signatures](#). Most of the signatories are Americans like myself who want to be able to feel proud of their country, but cannot do so while we are assisting the Iraqi government in its violent internal repression.

Sincerely,
Ross Caputi



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Petition to Stop US from Arming Iraqi Government's Assault on Fallujah

We created a [petition](#) demanding that the US stop sending weapons to the

Iraqi government. Since December 22, the Maliki government has been carrying out an operation in Iraq's al Anbar province under the banner of fighting terrorist groups that are hiding there, but it soon became clear that it was a widespread, armed attack directed at the residential areas in Rumadi and Fallujah, with random bombing of buildings using heavy artillery, tanks, and air strikes.

While the Iraqi government has claimed that Fallujah is overrun by ISIS, ISIL, or Al Qaeda, this has been proven untrue. In fact, there is a popular uprising in Fallujah.

The US recently shipped helicopters for the Maliki government's use and is discussing sending an additional shipment of hellfire missiles. The US should not be selling, gifting, or loaning weapons to a government that is using them to kill its own people.

We collected 11,610 signatures. View them [here](#).

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