

# University at Buffalo Faculty and Staff for Peace Open Letter

February 17, 2003

We the undersigned faculty and staff of the University at Buffalo strongly oppose another United States-led war on Iraq for the following reasons:

1. Another war on Iraq, especially one begun with a barrage of missiles designed to avoid American casualties, will cause the death of numerous innocent Iraqi men, women, and children and will destroy what remains of the social fabric and physical infrastructure of that country. The sustained military operations required to occupy Iraq, especially those requiring urban combat, will result in extensive casualties among the men and women of the U.S. armed forces.
2. No convincing evidence has yet been provided that Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction or the capacity or intention to use them against its neighbors or the United States. If and when such evidence is forthcoming, the U.S. should cooperate with the United Nations to dismantle such weapons in a responsible manner, not through extensive bombing campaigns that will poison the land, water, and air of the region.
3. Any preemptive U.S. military action against Iraq, including enforcement of no-fly zones, without a Congressional declaration of war and U.N. Security Council authorization, is unconstitutional and contrary to international law. It undermines the legitimacy of even worthy American goals in international affairs and sets back the cause of the rule of law in the world.
4. Another war on Iraq, especially one lacking the full support of NATO and other allies, will quickly divide and polarize the American people. It will be ruinously expensive in a time of growing government deficits and a weak economy, and set back efforts to deal with domestic social needs.
5. The fundamental problems leading to endemic tension and continuing violence in the Middle East can and should be resolved through negotiations among the parties concerned or through unilateral actions that address the root causes of conflict. For example, Israel should agree to terminate settlements in the occupied territories in return for an end to terrorist attacks and recognition of Israel's right to exist in peace. The U.S. should withdraw its forces from Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf, removing one major reason for escalating assaults on U.S. personnel in the region and on the U.S. people at home.
6. U. S. dependence on imported oil has distorted our foreign policy and put our economy at risk, while increased exploitation of domestic oil threatens the environment. The U.S. should radically reduce its oil consumption through concerted programs of energy conservation, the development of renewable sources of energy, and the expansion of public transportation.

The United States stands at a major turning point, facing imperial overreach and increased isolation among the nations of the world, on the one hand, and democratic procedures that can once again make the republic a model for a more just and peaceful world, on the other. Another war in Iraq will mean choosing empire over democracy.

*The names and affiliations of verified letter signers follow on separate pages. Printable versions of this letter, signature forms and all signatures collected to date are available on-line at:*

<http://www.buffalopeacepeople.org/UB-Letters&Petitions>