

# War is the Big Issue of the Campaign



By Cliff Kincaid

It may be the sleeper issue of the 2020 presidential campaign – trigger-happy Joe Biden’s record of support for the disastrous Iraq War and his repeated lies about his role in starting that war.

But like those offering excuses for Nancy Pelosi going to a beauty parlor that is closed to ordinary people, many “progressives” are prepared to overlook Biden’s war-mongering past because their allegiance to the Democratic Party supersedes their commitment to ending foreign wars.

This came up during the Republican National Convention when Senator Rand Paul said, “Joe Biden voted for the Iraq War, which President Trump has long called the worst geopolitical mistake of our generation. I fear Biden will choose war again. He supported the war in Serbia, Syria, Libya.”

That’s a lot of war.

Even the liberal “fact-checking” website PolitiFact [rated](#) Paul’s remarks as “mostly true,” with the caveat that Biden claimed that on one occasion he privately questioned military action.

Biden was essential to the Iraq War going forward.

After President Bush went to war in Iraq, with the strong support of then-Senator Joe Biden, he rewarded former CIA

Director George Tenet with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. The invasion of Iraq, launched in part on the basis of false information provided by Tenet's CIA, was justified by the argument that American troops were helping to build a democratic and lasting government in Baghdad that would stabilize the area and reduce the terrorist threat. Instead, the invasion led to Iranian domination of Iraq and the rise of ISIS.

In an article in *The American Conservative*, Daniel McCarthy [wrote](#), "The Iraq War launched by the Bush administration (with the support of Democrats like Joe Biden, of course) destroyed the Saddam Hussein regime that had kept a check on Iranian power. More than that, it destabilized Iraq, and ultimately Syria as well, in ways that created channels for wider Iranian influence."

Biden has claimed that the declaration of war on Iraq, titled, "Authorization for the Use of Force," was not an authorization for President Bush to invade Iraq and go to war. But that's not the only lie he has told.

CNN reported that, in response to an Iowa voter who expressed concern about Biden's foreign policy record, the former vice president said that he opposed the Iraq War "from the very moment" it began in 2003. That was another lie. Even CNN noted this lie, in an [article](#), "Biden again dishonestly suggests he opposed the Iraq War from the beginning." CNN stated, "It's false that Biden opposed the war from the moment Bush started it in March 2003. Biden repeatedly spoke in favor of the war both before and after it began."

Incredibly, CNN added that Biden's campaign had previously said that he "misspoke" when he made a similar claim. Bernie Sanders [accused](#) Biden of "rewriting history" over his vote for the war.

The record is clear: Biden lied repeatedly about going to war,

and doesn't seem to know when he lies and when he tells the truth. This is a sign of brain damage.

Biden co-sponsored a resolution supporting the invasion and [declared](#), "I do not believe this is a rush to war. 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 ..."

A mini-documentary, "[WORTH THE PRICE? Joe Biden and the Launch of the Iraq War](#)," explores what the Institute for Public Accuracy calls "Biden's pivotal role in backing the invasion with disastrous results." Produced and directed by Mark Weisbrot and narrated by Danny Glover, it examines Biden's role as the chairman of the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in 2002. Weisbrot wrote an op-ed for *The Guardian*, [declaring](#), "[Biden] 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."

Weisbrot wrote, "The Iraq War has been a prominent, even decisive issue, in some recent US presidential elections. It played a significant role in the surprise presidential primary victory won by a freshman senator from Illinois named Barack Obama in 2008. His heavily favored Democratic primary opponent, Hillary Clinton, had voted in the US Senate to authorize the war, and Obama didn't let her forget it during that contest."

Foreign policy expert Stephen Zunes wrote an [article](#), "Would Joe Biden, Like Hillary Clinton, Lose to Donald Trump Over the Iraq War?." He argued that Biden's role in getting the war authorization through the Democratic-controlled Senate has "raised serious questions regarding his electability."

The "WORTH THE PRICE?" [website](#) is still a worthwhile stop for those interested in Biden's commitment to the military-

industrial complex. But it's too late for the "progressives" to stop Biden from getting the nomination. And we are now learning that Biden's foreign policy team is [laying the groundwork](#) for another war in Syria if Biden wins in November.

One political operative, [Jacob Jeremiah "Jake" Sullivan](#), is a prominent Democratic foreign policy adviser to Joe Biden and previously served as a Senior Policy Advisor to the Hillary Clinton Presidential Campaign. He [claims](#) that, "During his tenure as vice president, Joe Biden led the effort to end the Iraq War," ignoring his role in authorizing that war.

Sullivan noted that Biden is "the parent of a service member who deployed to Iraq" and "he understands the risks our troops take to keep our country safe. Sending them to fight overseas is not an academic exercise for Joe Biden – it's deeply personal."

That was a reference to Beau Biden, an Iraq war veteran who died from brain cancer. Another son, Hunter, was [discharged](#) from the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine.

As of August 31, 2020, the Pentagon's [casualty report](#) estimates total American deaths in Iraq at 4,431, with 31,994 wounded in action. There have been tens of thousands of civilian casualties and the war has cost the U.S. \$2 trillion.

President Trump has been withdrawing U.S. forces and says that the number of troops in Iraq will drop from the current 5,200 down to 3,500. "We're down to a very small number of soldiers in Iraq now," Trump said, "We defeated the ISIS caliphate in Iraq and Syria."

The current US-Iraq Strategic Dialogue is based on the continuing draw down of U.S. forces.

Branko Marcetic, the left-wing author of a book about Biden, *Yesterday's Man*, [argues](#) that "Biden holds significant

responsibility for the bloodshed that has engulfed Iraq and the surrounding region since the invasion.” He notes that Rep. Seth Moulton, who also ran for the Democratic presidential nomination, had [called](#) for Biden to admit he was wrong for voting for the war.

What’s more, a POLITICO/Morning Consult poll [showed](#) more than 40 percent of participants between eighteen and twenty-nine were less likely to back Biden because of it. That includes millions of men, ages 18 through 25, who are required to register for the Selective Service and a draft to wage war.

There is a push by some “progressives” who support Biden to change the males-only draft registration system to include women. But while women don’t have to currently register for the draft, they can volunteer for the military and go to war in foreign countries.

Like their male counterparts, they can judge Trump’s opposition to never-ending foreign wars with Biden’s lies about his role in making the Iraq War possible.

The conclusion is that Trump is the anti-war candidate.

As Senator Paul [said](#), “President Trump is the first president in a generation to seek to end war rather than start one. He intends to end the war in Afghanistan. He is bringing our men and women home. Madison once wrote, ‘No nation can preserve its freedom in the midst of continuous warfare.’ I’m proud to finally see a president who agrees with that.”

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