

100 FACTS AND 1 OPINION: THE NON-ARGUABLE CASE AGAINST THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION

IRAQ

1. The Bush Administration has spent more than \$140 billion on a war of choice in Iraq.
2. The Bush Administration sent troops into battle without adequate body armor or armored Humvees.
3. The Bush Administration ignored estimates from Gen. Eric Shinseki that several hundred thousand troops would be required to secure Iraq.
4. Vice President Cheney said Americans “will, in fact, be greeted as liberators” in Iraq.
5. During the Bush Administration's war in Iraq, more than 1,000 US troops have lost their lives and more than 7,000 have been injured.
6. In May 2003 President Bush landed on an aircraft carrier in a flight suit, stood under a banner proclaiming *Mission Accomplished* and triumphantly announced that major combat operations were over in Iraq. Asked if he had any regrets about the stunt, Bush said, “You bet I'd do it again.”
7. Vice President Cheney said that Iraq was “the geographic base of the terrorists who have had us under assault for many years, but most especially on 9/11.” The bipartisan 9/11 Commission found that Iraq had no involvement in the 9/11 attacks and no collaborative operational relationship with Al Qaeda.
8. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice said that high-strength aluminum tubes acquired by Iraq were “only really suited for nuclear weapons programs,” warning, “we don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud.” The government's top nuclear scientists had told the Administration the tubes were “too narrow, too heavy, too long” to be of use in developing nuclear weapons and could be used for other purposes.
9. The Bush Administration has spent just \$1.1 billion of the \$18.4 billion Congress approved for Iraqi reconstruction.
10. According to the Administration's hand-picked weapon's inspector, Charles Duelfer, there is “no evidence that Hussein had passed illicit weapons material to al Qaeda or other terrorist organizations, or had any

intent to do so.” After the release of the report, Bush continued to insist, “There was a risk—a real risk—that Saddam Hussein would pass weapons, or materials, or information to terrorist networks.”

11. According to Duelfer, the UN inspections regime put an “economic stranglehold” on Hussein that prevented him from developing a WMD program for more than twelve years.

TERRORISM

12. After receiving a memo from the CIA in August 2001 titled “Bin Laden Determined to Attack America,” President Bush continued his monthlong vacation.

13. The Bush Administration failed to commit enough troops to capture Osama bin Laden when US forces had him cornered in the Tora Bora region of Afghanistan in November 2001. Instead, they relied on local warlords.

14. The Bush Administration secured less nuclear material from sites around the world vulnerable to terrorists in the two years after 9/11 than were secured in the two years before 9/11.

15. The Bush Administration underfunded Nunn-Lugar—the program intended to keep the former Soviet Union's nuclear legacy out of the hands of terrorists and rogue states—by \$45.5 million.

16. The Bush Administration has assigned five times as many agents to investigate Cuban embargo violations as it has to track Osama bin Laden's and Saddam Hussein's money.

17. According to Congressional Research Service data, the Bush Administration has underfunded security at the nation's ports by more than \$1 billion for fiscal year 2005.

18. The Bush Administration did not devote the resources necessary to prevent a resurgence in the production of poppies, the raw material used to create heroin, in Afghanistan—creating a potent new source of financing for terrorists.

19. Vice President Cheney told voters that unless they elect George Bush in November, “we'll get hit again” by terrorists.

20. Even though an Al Qaeda training manual suggests terrorists come to the United States and buy assault weapons, the Bush Administration did nothing to prevent the expiration of the ban on them.

21. Despite repeated calls for reinforcements, there are fewer experienced CIA agents assigned to the unit dealing with Osama bin Laden now than there were before 9/11.

22. Before 9/11, John Ashcroft proposed slashing counterterrorism funding by 23 percent.

23. Between January 20, 2001, and September 10, 2001, the Bush Administration publicly mentioned Al Qaeda one time.

24. The Bush Administration granted the 9/11 Commission \$3 million to investigate the September 11 attacks and \$50 million to the commission that investigated the Columbia space shuttle crash.

25. More than three years after 9/11, just 5 percent of all cargo—including cargo transported on passenger planes—is screened.

NATIONAL SECURITY

26. During the Bush Administration, North Korea quadrupled its suspected nuclear arsenal from two to eight weapons.

27. The Bush Administration has openly opposed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, undermining nuclear nonproliferation efforts.

28. The Bush Administration has spent \$7 billion this year—and plans to spend \$10 billion next year—for a missile defense system that has never worked in a test that wasn't rigged.

29. The Bush Administration underfunded the needs of the nation's first responders by \$98 billion, according to a Council on Foreign Relations study.

CRONYISM AND CORRUPTION

30. The Bush Administration awarded a multibillion-dollar no-bid contract to Halliburton—a company that still pays Vice President Cheney hundreds of thousands of dollars in deferred compensation each year (Cheney also has Halliburton stock options). The company then repeatedly overcharged the military for services, accepted kickbacks from subcontractors and served troops dirty food.

31. The Bush Administration told Saudi Prince Bandar bin Sultan about plans to go to war with Iraq before telling Secretary of State Colin Powell.

32. The Bush Administration relentlessly pushed an energy bill containing \$23.5 billion in corporate tax breaks, much of which would have benefited major campaign contributors.

33. The Bush Administration paid Iraqi-exile and neocon darling Ahmad Chalabi \$400,000 a month for intelligence, including fabricated claims about Iraqi WMDs. It continued to pay him for months after discovering that he was providing inaccurate information.

34. The Bush Administration installed as top officials more than 100 former lobbyists, attorneys or spokespeople for the industries they oversee.

35. The Bush Administration let disgraced Enron CEO Ken Lay—a close friend of President Bush—help write its energy policy.

36. Top Bush Administration officials accepted \$127,600 in jewelry and other presents from the Saudi royal family in 2003, including diamond-and-sapphire jewelry valued at \$95,500 for First Lady Laura Bush.

37. Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge awarded lucrative contracts to several companies in which he is an investor, including Microsoft, GE, Sprint, Pfizer and Oracle.

38. President Bush used images of fire-fighters carrying flag-draped coffins through the rubble of the World Trade Center to score political points in a campaign advertisement.

THE ECONOMY

39. President Bush's top economic adviser, Greg Mankiw, said the outsourcing of American jobs abroad was “a plus for the economy in the long run.”

40. The Bush Administration turned a \$236 billion surplus into a \$422 billion deficit.

41. The Bush Administration implemented regulations that made millions of workers ineligible for overtime pay.

42. The Bush Administration has crippled state budgets by underfunding federal mandates by \$175 billion.

43. President Bush is the first President since Herbert Hoover to have a net loss of jobs—around 800,000—over a four-year term.

44. The Bush Administration gave Accenture a multibillion-dollar border control contract even though the company moved its operations to Bermuda to avoid paying taxes.

45. In 2000, candidate George W. Bush said, “the vast majority of my tax cuts go to the bottom end of the spectrum.” He passed the tax cuts, but the top 20 percent of earners received 68 percent of the benefits.

46. In 2000, candidate George W. Bush promised to pay down the national debt to a historically low level. As of September 30, the national debt stood at \$7,379,052,696,330.32, a record high.

47. As major corporate scandals rocked the nation's economy, the Bush Administration reduced the enforcement of corporate tax law—conducting fewer audits, imposing fewer penalties, pursuing fewer prosecutions and making virtually no effort to prosecute corporate tax crimes.

48. The Bush Administration increased tax audits for the working poor.

49. In 2000, candidate George W. Bush promised to protect the Social Security surplus. As President, he spent all of it.

50. The Bush Administration proposed slashing funding for the largest federal

public housing program, putting 2 million families in danger of losing their housing.

51. The Bush Administration did nothing to prevent the minimum wage from falling to an inflation-adjusted fifty-year low.

EDUCATION

52. The Bush Administration underfunded the No Child Left Behind Act by \$9.4 billion.

53. In 2000, candidate George W. Bush promised to increase the maximum federal scholarship, or Pell Grant, by 50 percent. Instead, each year he has been in office he has frozen or cut the maximum scholarship amount.

54. The Bush Administration's Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, called the National Education Association—a union of teachers—a “terrorist organization.”

HEALTHCARE

55. The Bush Administration, in violation of the law, refused to allow Medicare actuary Richard Foster to tell members of Congress the actual cost of their Medicare bill. Instead, they repeated a figure they knew was \$100 billion too low.

56. The nonpartisan GAO concluded the Bush Administration created illegal, covert propaganda—in the form of fake news reports—to promote its industry-backed Medicare bill.

57. The Bush Administration stunted research that could lead to new treatments for Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, diabetes, spinal injuries, heart disease and muscular dystrophy by placing severe restrictions on the use of federal dollars for embryonic stem-cell research.

58. The Bush Administration reinstated the “global gag rule,” which requires foreign NGOs to withhold information about legal abortion services or lose US funds for family planning.

59. The Bush Administration authorized twenty companies that have been charged with fraud at the federal or state level to offer Medicare prescription drug cards to seniors.

60. The Bush Administration created a prescription drug card for Medicare that locks seniors into one card for up to a year but allows the corporations offering the cards to change their prices once a week.

61. The Bush Administration blocked efforts to allow Medicare to negotiate cheaper prescription drug prices for seniors.

62. At the behest of the french fry industry, the Bush Administration USDA changed their definition of fresh vegetables to include frozen french fries.

63. In a case before the Supreme Court, the Bush Administration sided with HMOs—arguing that patients shouldn't be allowed to sue HMOs when they are improperly denied

treatment. With the Administration's help, the HMOs won.

64. The Bush Administration went to court to block lawsuits by patients who were injured by defective prescription drugs and medical devices.

65. President Bush signed a Medicare law that allows companies that reduce health-care benefits for retirees to receive substantial subsidies from the government.

66. Since President Bush took office, more than 5 million people have lost their health insurance.

67. The Bush Administration blocked a proposal to ban the use of arsenic-treated lumber in playground equipment, even though it conceded it posed a danger to children.

68. One day after President Bush bragged about his efforts to help seniors afford healthcare, the Administration announced the largest dollar increase of Medicare premiums in history.

69. The Bush Administration—at the behest of the tobacco industry—tried to water down a global treaty that aimed to help curb smoking.

70. The Bush Administration has spent \$270 million on abstinence-only education programs even though there is no scientific evidence demonstrating that they are effective in dissuading teenagers from having sex or reducing the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases.

71. The Bush Administration slashed funding for programs that suggested ways, other than abstinence, to avoid sexually transmitted diseases.

ENVIRONMENT

72. The Bush Administration gutted clean-air standards for aging power plants, resulting in at least 20,000 premature deaths each year.

73. The Bush Administration eliminated protections on more than 200 million acres of public land.

74. President Bush broke his promise to place limits on carbon dioxide emissions, an essential step in combating global warming.

75. Days after 9/11, The Bush Administration told people living near Ground Zero that the air was safe—even though they knew it wasn't—subjecting hundreds of people to unnecessary, debilitating ailments.

76. The Bush Administration created a massive tax loophole for SUVs—allowing, for example, the write-off of the entire cost of a new Hummer.

77. The Bush Administration put former coal-industry big shots in the government and let them roll back safety regulations, putting miners at greater risk of black lung disease.

78. The Bush Administration said that even though the weed killer atrazine was seeping

into water supplies—creating, among other bizarre creatures, hermaphroditic frogs—there was no reason to regulate it.

79. The Bush Administration has proposed cutting the budget of the Environmental Protection Agency by \$600 million next year.

80. President Bush broke his campaign promise to end the maintenance backlog at national parks. He has provided just 7 percent of the funds needed, according to National Park Service estimates.

RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES

81. Since 9/11, Attorney General John Ashcroft has detained 5,000 foreign nationals in antiterrorism sweeps; none have been convicted of a terrorist crime.

82. The Bush Administration ignored pleas from the International Committee of the Red Cross to stop the abuse of prisoners in US custody.

83. In violation of international law, the Bush Administration hid prisoners from the Red Cross so the organization couldn't monitor their treatment.

84. The Bush Administration, without ever charging him with a crime, arrested US citizen José Padilla at an airport in Chicago, held him in a naval brig in South Carolina for two years, denied him access to a lawyer and prohibited any contact with his friends and family.

85. President Bush's top legal adviser wrote a memo to the President advising him that he can legally authorize torture.

86. At the direction of Bush Administration officials, the FBI went door to door questioning people planning on protesting at the 2004 political conventions.

87. The Bush Administration refuses to support the creation of an independent commission to investigate the abuse of foreign prisoners in American custody. Instead, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld selected the members of a commission to review the conduct of his own department.

FLIP FLOPS

88. President Bush opposed the creation of the 9/11 Commission before he supported it, delaying an essential inquiry into one of the greatest intelligence failures in American history.

89. President Bush said gay marriage was a state issue before he supported a constitutional amendment banning it.

90. President Bush said he was committed to capturing Osama bin Laden “dead or alive” before he said, “I truly am not that concerned about him.”

91. President Bush said we had found

weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, before he admitted we hadn't found them.

92. President Bush said, “You can't distinguish between Al Qaeda and Saddam when you talk about the war on terror,” before he admitted Saddam had no role in 9/11.

BIOGRAPHY

93. George Bush didn't come close to meeting his commitments to the National Guard. Records show he performed no service in a six-month period in 1972 and a three-month period in 1973.

94. In June 1990 George Bush violated federal securities law when he failed to inform the SEC that he had sold 200,000 shares of his company, Harken Energy. Two months later the company reported significant losses and by the end of that year the stock had dropped from \$3 to \$1.

95. When asked at an April 2004 press conference to name a mistake he made during his presidency, Bush couldn't think of one.

SECURITY

96. The Bush Administration refuses to release twenty-seven pages of a Congressional report that allegedly detail the Saudi Arabian government's connections to the 9/11 hijackers.

97. Last year the Bush Administration spent \$6.5 billion creating 14 million new classified documents and securing old secrets—the highest level of spending in ten years.

98. The Bush Administration spent \$120 classifying documents for every \$1 it spent declassifying documents.

99. The Bush Administration has spent millions of dollars and defied numerous court orders to conceal from the public who participated in Vice President Cheney's 2001 energy task force.

100. The Bush Administration—reversing years of bipartisan tradition—refuses to answer questions from Democratic members of Congress about how the White House is spending taxpayer money.

OPINION

If the past informs the future, four more years of the Bush Administration will be a tragic period in the history of the United States and the world.

The 100 Facts were compiled by Judd Legum, deputy research director at the American Progress Action Fund. Sourced version available at www.thenation.com.