

Iraq and Just War Criteria

Proper Authority – Sovereign leader (Bush) or UN backing? Just Cause – WMD or Saddam's mass murder; Right Intention – bring peace and democracy, or oil?; Last Resort – allow weapons inspectors to report? Proportionality – 100,000s died; Just Method– US criticised for 'smart' bombs: 20,000+ civilians died in Iraq.

Child Soldiers

30,000 child soldiers are being used in the Congo. Many under the age of 10. 1/3 are girls. Most were abducted from their villages. Shot if they say no. Girls often end up as sex slaves. 1/3 will never be reintegrated into their communities.

Geneva convention

Guantanamo Bay – people arrested and detained without trial. Torture – Bush denied that 'waterboarding' is torture, but many have criticised this. Other complaints include sexual degradation, religious persecution, forced drugging, torture with broken glass, barbed wire, cigarettes.

Recruitment

Fahrenheit 9-11 showed recruiters making false and misleading claims to recruit primarily poor, black youths to join the army. Many see them as 'cannon fodder', and feel that the support given to veterans, the families of dead soldiers etc. Is very poor.

Pacifism

Martin Luther King is an excellent example of someone who stood up against war – he advised his congregation not to support the Vietnam War. He also used peaceful methods of protest with great effect. He did not use violence even when his home was bombed. He felt you could challenge injustice effectively by standing up for what you believe in without resorting to violence.

Genocide

In Darfur, over 300,000 have died (according to the UN – most from diseases) and millions displaced. The UN called it 'war crimes' but without the 'intent to commit genocide'. The problems are complex, both racial and religious tensions, as well as issues to do with oil and poverty.

Landmines

Now called IEDs (improvised explosive devices), these are anti-personnel and anti-vehicle weapons that often remain around for years after the conflict has finished. They kill indiscriminately. The Ottawa Treaty to prohibit their use has been signed by 158 nations. There are other indiscriminate devices (like cluster bombs) still widely used.

Hiroshima

The 2 atomic bombs killed 100,000s – over 400,000 names are listed on the memorials. The decision to drop the bombs was made on pragmatic grounds, as more would have died if the war had continued. Within a week of the second explosion, the Japanese surrendered. Some argue that the 1.6 million Soviet troops would have brought about a surrender.