The War on Terror

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 were a stark reminder of how vulnerable the world was to terrorist acts. The Global War on Terror is an ongoing campaign by the United States and its allies to prevent international terrorism.

America’s most notable foe in the war on terror has been Al Queda, a violent organization that seeks to end western influence in Muslim countries. Al Queda’s terrorist operations have been funded largely by Osama bin Laden, a member of a wealthy construction family. Bin Ladin was the subject of a $25 million reward offered by the American State Department before he was killed by American forces in Pakistan in 2011.

The Taliban controlled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001. The Taliban continued to allow Bin Laden to live in Afghanistan after he was accused of funding the attacks of September 11, 2001. The United States, aided by Great Britain and other allies, attacked Afghanistan a month after September 11 and removed the Taliban from power. The Taliban remain a terrorist organization fighting the American-backed elected government in Afghanistan.

Saddam Hussein led Iraq from 1979 until his removal from power in 2003. In 1980, Saddam began a bloody war with Iran, hoping to seize control of oil rich land. Iran and Iraq fought for nine years, and as many as one million people died, but the war ended without either side able to claim victory.

The war with Iran left Iraq with huge debts. Saddam needed funds to maintain his army, which he used to control the Iraqi people. In 1990, he decided to invade the tiny oil-rich nation of Kuwait. A multinational military force, led by the United States, responded to the invasion and liberated Kuwait in January 1991.

As part of the peace settlement after what became known as the Gulf War, Saddam agreed to allow inspectors to ensure that he was not building weapons of mass destruction. Saddam was already responsible for the deaths of millions in the Iran-Iraq war, and if he had access to nuclear weapons, the results may have been disastrous for the entire world. In a speech to the American people in 2002, President George W. Bush stated that it was his goal “to prevent regimes (governments) that sponsor terror from threatening America or our friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction.” When Saddam refused to allow weapons inspectors into Iraq, the United States Congress gave President Bush the authority to invade.

The United States its allies forced Saddam from power in 2003. The dictator was later captured and put on trial by the newly elected government of Iraq for “crimes against humanity.” He was found guilty and executed in 2006. Weapons inspectors later determined that Saddam Hussein did not have weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

The United States began to draw down forces in Iraq and Afghanistan in the early 2010s. In 2013, President Barack Obama said, “Our systematic effort to dismantle terrorist organizations must continue, but this war, like all wars, must end. That’s what history advises. It’s what our democracy demands.”
Fill in the Blanks

The G__________ War on T__________ is the ongoing c__m__a__gn by the U__________
S___________ and it’s a_l__es to p__e__e__t international t__r__o__i__m. The most notable
f____ in the W____ on T__________ is A__ Q_________, a v__o__e__t terrorist group committed
to ending W__________ influence in M__________ countries.

Al Queda has been funded partly by O__________ b____ L___________, the scion on a wealth
c______________________ family. The United State attacked A__g__a__t__n in part because
the ruling T__l__b__n gave bin Laden protection after the t__r__o__i__t attacks of September 11,
2001. O__________ b____ L___________ was captured and killed in 20____, but Al Queda continues to
exert influence around the world.

The United States and several allied nations removed S__dd__m H__s__e__n from power in 2003.
More than one m___________ people died in a n________-year war S__________ began with
I______ in 1980. Saddam attempted to p_____ his huge w_____ debt by i_v_d___ng the oil-rich
nation of K__w__it, b ut he was defeated by a group of nations led by the U__i__ed S__a__es in what
became known as the Gulf War. The peace s_t_l__n__t Saddam signed required him to allow
i_s__e__t__rs into his nations to prove he was not have *n__c__e__r  weapons. Saddam was later
c_p__u__ed and put on t__l for “c__i__es against h___m__n__ty.” He was s_n__c__d to
d_a__h in 2006.

Answer in complete sentences

*1. What do you think Al Queda hopes to accomplish?

______________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________

*2. Why did the United States invade Iraq in 2003?

______________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________

3. Why do you think the American government began to draw down forces in the early 2010ss?

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*A higher order learning question. Any reasonable answer will be accepted.
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