



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on July 22, 2024

MSNBC's Revisionist History About JD Vance and America's Failed Wars

It has been pointed out that during our history, it is Democrats who've gotten us involved in most of our wars. They've also had a strong hand, to say the least, in sparking our failed ones. This didn't stop MSNBC from claiming otherwise in a hit piece on GOP vice-presidential candidate J.D. Vance.

MSNBC's Revisionist History

Written by one Alexander Nazaryan and titled "JD Vance's revisionist history about who launched America's failed wars," the issue is actually MSNBC's revisionist history about our failed wars and Vance's Republican National Convention (RNC) speech.



AP Images
J.D. Vance

Nazaryan also repeats an "agreed upon myth," to quote Napoleon's theory of history, about weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) in Iraq that absolutely should be addressed.

Nazaryan opens [writing](#), "If you listened to Republican vice presidential nominee JD Vance ... you'd think it was Democrats — and President Joe Biden, in particular — who were to blame for thousands upon thousands of combat deaths and postwar suicides of American military personnel who served in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq."

And if you listened to MSNBC, you'd think Vance said a lot about Afghanistan and Iraq. In reality, he barely mentioned those wars at all.

What Did Vance Really Say?

In fact, what Nazaryan proceeded to write was almost the sum total of Vance's relevant remarks. "'When I was a senior in high school, that same Joe Biden supported the disastrous invasion of Iraq,' said Vance, who enlisted in the Marines and served in Iraq, before attending Ohio State and Yale Law," the MSNBC scribe relates. Vance "later added: 'From Iraq to Afghanistan, from the financial crisis to the great recession, from open borders to stagnating wages, the people who govern this country have failed and failed again.'"

To be precise, the above was the *only time* in the speech Vance mentioned Iraq and Afghanistan. Moreover, he spoke of "war" just twice, when saying that "jobs were sent overseas and children were sent to war" and that, together, "we will send our kids to war only when we must."

Moreover, Vance didn't explicitly implicate the Democrats in the aforementioned conflicts. Strikingly, he in fact only mentioned the party *once* in his whole speech, when stating that the "Democrats flooded the country with illegal immigrants." (And since this is a de facto foreign army invited in to help the Democrats win power, one could say it's another war they've launched.) That's it.



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So Nazaryan's commentary tells us more about him than it does about Vance. Is he, as someone who identifies with the Democrats, feeling self-conscious? Is this a thou "doth protest too much" situation? Or is he just propagandizing?

Vance's History

In reality, it's not surprising that Vance didn't put any special onus on Democrats with respect to our "forever wars"; he doesn't appear to *ever* have done so. Rather, being a "[rustbelt advocate](#)" raised in Appalachia, his antipathy has been toward the establishment *in general* — Democratic *and* Republican.

In fact, "Growing up in the Rustbelt, Vance came to see, firsthand, how the spread of globalization and shifting economic landscapes left many working-class communities behind," [writes](#) the *Christian Post* today. The site goes on to say that middle Americans see a "strong disconnect" between their struggles and the feds' priorities. "Billions of dollars in foreign aid and military interventions abroad are difficult to reconcile with local job losses, decaying infrastructure and the opioid crisis," the *Post* continued. "Resentment starts to build."

Love him or hate him, *this* is where Vance is coming from. It's what his 2016 book, *Hillbilly Elegy*, which won him fame well before he entered politics, is all about. He's a common-man crusader, not an anti-Democratic one, which is why he said in his speech that he'll "never" forget "where he came from." It's also why, other than mentioning Biden — whom he and President Trump *were* running against — he put the onus in the remarks Nazaryan cited on "the people who govern this country" (in general).

Which Is the Real Party of War?

But what of the matter of our "failed wars"? Far-left website The Baffler had something to say about it in its 2014 [article](#) "Democrats Are the Real Party of War." After pointing out that then-president Barack Obama readily prosecuted "drone wars" in multiple Muslim countries, the outlet wrote that indeed, "all of the major U.S. wars in the 20th century—World War I, II, Korea and Vietnam [the latter two being notable failed wars]—were entered by Democratic administrations. Harry Truman, a Democrat, is still the only world leader to use a nuclear bomb on a population." (In fairness, this action accorded with WWII norms.)

In fact, for "most of the 20th century Republicans were (at least avowedly) isolationist," The Baffler summed up, later adding that "the narrative that the Republicans have historically been the party of war, and Democrats all peace-loving doves, is an absurd fiction."

This is precisely why, too, the following exchange occurred in May between John Lennon's son and author Ryan James Girdusky:

Technically they always were the war party:

Wilson got us into WWI

FDR was POTUS for WWII

Truman started Korea

JFK/Johnson started Vietnam

They became anti war because of Bush but the minute Obama continued most of his policies, they dropped the charade.

— Ryan James Girdusky (@RyanGirdusky) [May 25, 2024](#)



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Quite true. Moreover, the Afghanistan and Iraq invasions, in 2001 and 2003, were bipartisan affairs.

WMDs

So Democratic enlightened-peacenik claims are WMDs — weapons of mass deception — and this brings us to Nazaryan's WMD assertions. "It was [G.W.] Bush, in the thrall of hawkish Vice President Dick Cheney," he wrote, "who spun a fictitious narrative about Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction." This itself is a fiction.

Consider: In 1999, Democratic President Bill Clinton's Democratic secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, [said herself](#) that "Hussein had been acquiring weapons of mass destruction." In fact, he had *previously used them* and "gassed his own people," she pointed out.

Later, in 2002, Democratic ex-vice president Al Gore [stated](#) in a speech, "We know that he [Hussein] has stored secret supplies of biological and chemical weapons throughout his country."

In fact, left-wing site Snopes [provides a list](#) of Democrats who spoke about Iraq's WMDs. Moreover, U.S. intelligence agencies [claimed](#) Hussein had them, an assessment [seconded by](#) Britain's MI6.

U.S. troops ultimately failed to find Iraqi WMDs in 2003. Albright would later say (I'm paraphrasing), "We all thought they had them." Two exonerative theories were floated to explain their absence: that Hussein had moved them out of the country just prior to the U.S. invasion, and that he'd bluffed and exaggerated his capabilities to deter aggression.

This said, our Mideast military adventures certainly were folly, as [I wrote a generation ago](#). But the folly should be remembered accurately — and Iraqi WMDs were *not* a fiction "spun" by Bush.

Here's what also is not a fiction: Trump was [the first president](#) in more than 40 years to not get us involved in any new wars. And J.D. Vance shares this rational anti-militarism — aka pro-American foreign policy.



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