April 23, 2003
Time of Reflection: The War in Iraq

"The military action in Iraq is a cause of deep concern to all of us no matter where each of us stands on the issues of American policy.... We all join in hoping that the war will be brief and that the death and suffering it inflicts can be held to a minimum, both for our own men and women in uniform and for the people of Iraq.

Beyond that common hope, there will remain deep disagreements among us. It cannot be otherwise in a community devoted, as ours is, to pursuing thought and knowledge wherever they may lead, and to cherishing the free expression of opinion. I trust that even in a time of high emotion this will remain a campus where all feel free to speak their minds..." -- Lee L. Huntsman, Interim President

http://www.washington.edu/oue/wariniraq/
What is a Scientists/Engineer's Role?

Usually will start *long* before a war
Decision you may end up making soon after college!
Or one that is made for you if you don't take an active interest

What happens after war starts?

A war you believe in?
One you don’t?

If you are already in this, you may not have much choice!

You can’t control what you’ve done!

Even if you’re out of the game!!!

(Fermi & Nuke!)
Public Perception

You are in it even if you aren’t!

Conversations on the El...
Designing Engine on a Tank?
Designing outside armor?
Designing new target tracking system?
Designing new more deadly rounds?

Weapons of Mass Destruction??
Nukes!!!!

What IF????

US Unilaterally disarms - no nukes!

Whole World Celebrates!
Russia Economy Crashes

Ultra-Right-Wing old-timer comes to power

They have nukes!!!!

Launch Invasion!!!

How does this change your decision?
What if you’re a scientist and you’re “picked up”? Does the host country treat you as “bad”?

Iraqis: We Were Told to Destroy Bacteria

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Filed at 7:45 a.m. ET

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) -- Six Iraqi scientists working at different Baghdad research institutions were ordered to destroy some bacteria and equipment and hide more in their homes before visits from U.N. weapons inspectors in the months leading up to the war, the scientists told The Associated Press.

So - unlikely it will happen in the US

But should that change how we make our decision?
Like it or not, Scientists/Engineers do Enjoy a special Role in Society.

What special responsibilities does this give them?
Knowledge Enabled Mass Destruction

Technology:

Small Number of People → Huge Effect

Virus (retro or otherwise), Nerve Agents, etc.

Is it the responsibility of scientists to stop work on these lines of research even if they can yield good for society? (or even if they don't??)

Where do you draw the line if you believe in this (who draws the line)?

Even Velcro is used by the military!