

IRAQ: IN FOCUS

Talking Points for Grassroots Lobbying

FIGHTING TERRORISM IN IRAQ

There was no Al Qaeda in Iraq until the U.S. occupation and the dismantling of the Iraqi government and army.

The occupation in Iraq has **diverted needed resources from Afghanistan** allowing terrorist violence to reach levels not seen in that country since 9/11.

The 'war on terrorism' is futile. Real security from terrorism stems from **international cooperation and investment in human needs globally.**

More health and educational aid to the disenfranchised states will **weaken terrorism's influence on governments and citizens.**

SPEAK OUT!

Contact Your Congressional Representative
Call the congressional switchboard (202-224-3121) and ask to be connected to your Representative's and Senators' offices.



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EFFECTIVENESS OF THE 'SURGE'

The troops 'surge' of last summer was a feeble attempt by the Bush administration to compensate for gross incompetence in the initial planning of the occupation. The temporary quells in violence are unsustainable.

The decreases in violence are primarily due to backdoor dealing with individual local leaders not sustainable peace talks.

Ethnic cleansing of cities like Baghdad have segregated ethnic groups to different neighborhoods, creating temporarily calm enclaves waiting to erupt at any sign of instability.

Violence has decreased more substantially in areas where coalition forces have withdrawn as demonstrated in Basra where a 90% decrease in violence was noted after British troops withdrew.

From the Washington Post (12.19.07): "Iraqis of all sectarian and ethnic groups believe that the U.S. military invasion is the primary root of the violent differences among them, and see the departure of occupying forces as the key to national reconciliation, according to focus groups conducted for the U.S. military last month."

CONGRESSIONAL FUNDING

Despite the billions spent on this occupation many soldiers do not even have basic necessities to protect them while on mission. Military families are forced to send necessary equipment to soldiers often at a great expense.

There are currently 100,000 civilian contractors in Iraq paid for by U.S. tax dollars. These contractors, both security and otherwise, make substantially more in pay than a U.S. soldier.

Money wasted on contractors in Iraq takes funding away from struggling Veterans hospitals and direct service centers.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

We must engage in diplomatic cooperation with all bordering countries to ensure a peaceful and sovereign Iraqi future.

U.S. troop presence in Iraq perpetuates fears in Western Asia of a larger regional U.S. occupation of sovereign states.

Instability in Iraq, exacerbated by U.S. troop presence, affects the economic, social, and governmental stability of other regional states.

Regional states have a better understanding of the culture and history of Iraq than U.S. officials. They can assist the U.S. in meeting political benchmarks for Iraq.