

Why We Must Bring The Troops Home Now

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The occupation of Iraq is unjustified, immoral, and illegal.



Iraq posed no threat to the U.S., had no weapons of mass destruction and no ties to Al Qaeda. Even many Bush supporters (and the U.S. Army War College) admit this was a "war of choice" and not one of "self-defense." To use modern weapons to kill and destroy mostly innocent people and to take over Iraq was therefore unconscionable. It was a violation of Iraqi sovereignty and international law.

The death toll on all sides is mounting.

Forty thousand or more Iraqis have been killed or injured, and many more have lost their homes and property. At least 500 U.S. soldiers have died in Iraq as of mid-January—more than died in the first four years of the Vietnam War. Up to 20,000 more have been evacuated for medical reasons.

The occupation is making life miserable for ordinary Iraqis.

Public safety, especially for women and children, is almost non-existent. Unemployment is more than 50 percent. Wages have fallen from pre-war levels. Water and electricity are scarce. An end to the constant conflict, destruction and costs of the occupation is necessary for these conditions to improve.

There is no end in sight to the conflict.

Even the CIA admits that Iraqi public opposition to the U.S. is growing, not diminishing. Armed attacks have not let up and non-violent protests are constant. Washington is currently planning to keep the troops there until at least 2007. Prolonging the occupation means compounding the death, misery and costs each day.

The cost of the Iraq war is soaring: \$166 billion and counting.

Instead of spending this money on the occupation, these billions should be used to help both Iraq and the U.S. create jobs and safety, relieve poverty, and improve health and education.

The proposed transition to Iraqi power is a sham.

As long as the U.S. troops remain en masse, the U.S. will be the true power and all others will be mere figureheads who serve at the U.S.'s pleasure. Iraqis are loudly demanding direct elections, but the U.S. refuses for fear of not being able to control the outcome.

The war and occupation have expanded and inflamed terrorism, making our lives more dangerous and insecure.

The war has turned more and more people against the U.S. and has further legitimized the use of armed force. By rejecting the legitimacy of all aggressive wars and occupations we would be in a much better position to convince others that war and terrorism are wrong.

The war and occupation are isolating the U.S. from the countries and peoples of the world.

The U.N. refused to endorse the war and public opinion polls show that the overwhelming majority of people in other countries oppose the occupation. To rebuild goodwill, the government must admit it was wrong, reject the idea that might makes right and abide by international law.

If the U.S. leaves, the Iraqi people can reassert control over their own country.

The Iraqis whom the U.S. has handpicked and armed to serve Washington's interests should not be given control of the country. The U.N. should not participate in the U.S. occupation. But, once the U.S. agrees to leave, if important sectors of Iraqis request it, international bodies like the U.N. and/or the Arab League should help the Iraqis set up mechanisms through which the Iraqi people themselves choose their leaders and control their own country. The U.S. should then pour billions into rebuilding the country it has spent so much to destroy. ■

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