

WATCHDOG!



January 30, 2007

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www.sofar.org

IN THIS WATCHDOG

Iraq War

Mayor Rocky Anderson: "We are here today as true patriots. Blind obedience to bad leadership is not patriotism. Maligning the patriotism of others who stand up out of concern for the betrayal of our most cherished values is not patriotism. To sit back and let others fight for a return to decency, for a return to the rule of law, and for a return to the values of truth, compassion, and human rights is not patriotism."

General Odom: "The war has served primarily the interests of Iran and al-Qaeda, not American interests. We cannot reverse this outcome by more use of military force in Iraq."

General Clark: "We've undercut our legitimacy, and without that legitimacy... public support eroded. Without public support, the United States cannot succeed in the war against terror."

Iraq War (continued)

In our December Watchdog newsletter, *Save Our Forests and Ranchlands* announced its position against the Iraq war. Time has vindicated our stance against the war and its horrific political, social, environmental and constitutional consequences.

Across the political spectrum, commentators are generally agreed that the November 2006 elections were in effect a referendum against the Iraq war. For the Democratic Party to take control of both houses of Congress constituted a political revolution that overturned six years of incompetence, arrogance and reckless endangerment of the public good by the Bush administration. The new Democratic majority in Washington is quickly taking charge, exercising damage control over a rogue president and his unconstitutional policies.

Members of both parties, the general public, and high-ranking military officers are agreed that the war represents the number one political danger facing our country. We all must do our part. On behalf of the long-suffering people of Iraq, the principles of our constitution, and the reputation of America as a bulwark of freedom and justice, every citizen and governmental body must speak out on this subject of vital importance to our future. To quote Martin Luther King, *"Our lives end the day we begin to be silent about things that matter."*

The war matters. That is why we are dedicating this Watchdog to a *single objective*: a call to the cities of our County to join with 272 other cities across this great land to adopt a "Bring the Troops Home Resolution."

Below is a copy of our letter and a sample resolution from the City of Davis. Please join us when we ask each municipality to please put this on their agenda for discussion and action. If you would like to help by speaking at, or attending the public comment period of the city agenda, please email us and we can coordinate with others in your area.



SAVE OUR FOREST AND RANCHLANDS

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January 24, 2007

Mayor Jerry Sanders and Councilmembers
San Diego City Council
City Administration Building
11th Floor, 202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Mayor Sanders and Councilmembers:

We are writing to request that you place on your agenda for discussion and action a resolution to "Bring the Troops Home." The legality of the Iraq war and the legality of the Bush Administration's actions in support of the war is no longer a matter of debate. The results are in. The Iraq war represents a catastrophic failure for America at home and abroad. For the reasons stated below, the continuation of the Iraq war would further undermine the health and safety of the public and further threaten the principles of justice enshrined in our Constitution. Since the Iraq war and related actions of the Administration present a danger to the health and safety of your community and to the integrity of local laws, we believe it is within your responsibility, as local legislators, to act on this matter.

Several other governmental bodies have already taken up this issue. There are 272 cities that have passed "Bring the Troops Home Resolutions". Twenty four cities and governmental bodies have voted for impeachment of President Bush because he misled the American people regarding the reasons for war and because his Administration has prosecuted the war by illegal means.

In addition to the injustices of the war, it is no longer possible to ignore the grave impacts the Iraq war poses for San Diego and other American cities – namely, impacts on the health of our environment, the quality of our housing and transportation, and our financial stability.

The staggering costs of the war were revealed in the debt ceiling increase and in the national budget, which increased defense spending by trillions of dollars and undercut essential public programs. In 2006 the debt ceiling was raised from \$8.2 trillion to \$9 trillion; the cost of the war stands at \$248 billion and is escalating. Unbelievably, President Bush is now asking taxpayers for an extra hundred billion dollars to prop up

this failed policy. San Diego County's share of war costs is estimated to be over \$2.5 billion of taxpayer money. The human costs of the war remain incalculable.

It is no exaggeration to say that America is supporting this unjust war at the expense of its own cities. The American Society for Civil Engineers estimates there is a need for \$1.6 trillion of infrastructure investment within American municipalities. And, as the public well knows, our cities have not become more, but rather are less safe

Furthermore, the growing financial cost of the war has created such a deficit that the Bush Administration has embraced the dangerous concept that America's entire heritage is available to be sold. Amazingly, the 2006 budget plan includes the auction of 300,000 acres of national forest lands to fund roads and schools. At the same time, if we look beyond our borders, we see that the infrastructure of Iraq is in ruins, the insurgency is growing, and America's goodwill has been squandered around the world.

For these reasons, we ask you to place this item on your agenda and act to defend the Constitution and the health, safety and financial well-being of your community.

Sincerely,

SAVE OUR FOREST AND RANCLANDS

DUNCAN MCFETRIDGE
President

Attachment: Resolution; City of Davis, CA; Councilmember Stephen Souza

Davis City Resolution To Bring Our Troops Home

Drafted by MFSO Capital Region, Davis Peace Coalition and Councilmember Stephen Souza.

Resolution No. _____

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DAVIS CALLING ON PRESIDENT BUSH TO BRING OUR TROOPS HOME

WHEREAS, the citizens of the City of Davis and their local elected officials have the constitutional right to petition the national government on any matter of grave concern to our city, the nation, and the world community; and,

WHEREAS, the Davis City Council and the citizens of Davis respect and honor the men and women serving in the United States Armed Forces in Iraq and recognize the sacrifices that each of them is making; and

WHEREAS, the men and women of our Armed Forces are the sons and daughters of our community and we are concerned for their well-being and safety; and

WHEREAS, the United States of America carried out an invasion of Iraq based upon the claim that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, and therefore posed an immediate threat to the security of the United States and as of today, no evidence has been found that Iraq possessed such weapons or the capability to deploy them; and

WHEREAS, the Davis City Council unanimously passed a resolution on February 12, 2003, opposing a unilateral, preemptive military action against Iraq; and

WHEREAS, the war in Iraq has caused: a) the deaths of an estimated 100,000 Iraqis and more than 2,200 U.S. soldiers including over 200 Californians; b) the physical and psychological wounding and disabling of tens of thousands of Iraqis and more than 16,000 U.S. soldiers; and c) the destruction of the homes, communities, and livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis; and

WHEREAS, more than 300 billion dollars has been appropriated by Congress to fund military operations and reconstruction in Iraq; and,

WHEREAS, the cost of the Iraq war has diverted federal funds from programs and services in urban areas such as Davis, including education, housing, social services, infrastructure improvements, and homeland security; and,

WHEREAS, the cost of the call-up of members the Armed Forces for deployment in Iraq has been significant, as determined by the loss of lives, combat injuries, psychological trauma, disruption of family life, financial hardship for individual families, and businesses, interruption of civilian careers, and damage to the fabric of civic life in our community; and

WHEREAS, Californians have joined the National Guard thinking that they would be serving their neighbors by helping with California-based emergencies, unless there was a danger to the United States requiring transfer to active duty; and

WHEREAS, many members of the Armed Forces are entering their third or fourth deployment to Iraq; and

WHEREAS, the federalization and deployment of California National Guard members to the war in Iraq threatens the safety and well being of the citizens of Davis because the California National Guard is being diverted from its legally-assigned duties to respond to local emergencies including fires, floods, and earthquakes; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City Council of the City of Davis:

- 1) HEREBY urges the United States government to commence an orderly, rapid, and comprehensive withdrawal of United States military personnel from Iraq; and
- 2) HEREBY calls upon the President and the Congress of the United States to support our troops by ensuring that returning veterans receive compensation and care including full mental and physical health, education, disability, and rehabilitation benefits; and
- 3) HEREBY urges the United States government to provide the people of Iraq with appropriate non-military material aid as shall be necessary for the security of Iraq's citizens and for the rebuilding of Iraq.; and
- 4) HEREBY urges the United States government to establish a plan for an immediate transition of responsibility for internal security activities to the military forces of the Iraqi Government; and
- 5) HEREBY urges the establishment of a quick-reaction over-the-horizon peacekeeping force to be deployed in the region; and
- 6) HEREBY urges the United States government to pursue security and stability in Iraq through diplomacy; and
- 7) HEREBY calls upon the Mayor of Davis to forward this resolution immediately to President George W. Bush, Representative Mike Thompson, U.S. Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Senator Michael Machado, State Assembly Member Lois Wolk and the Supervisors for Yolo County.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Davis on this day of _____ by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

<http://www.mfsocap.org/spages/SD1135267604>