

PEACE HOUSE, ASHLAND, OREGON

WRITE WYDEN, MERKLEY: GET THE TROOPS HOME

Ten years in Afghanistan; more than eight in Iraq. Why are we still there? Permanent military bases in the Middle East and Central Asia, of course. That motive can't be sold to the American people, so it was never told to the American people. Now we must tell the military and the economic elites they serve: no more lives, no more tax dollars.

Personal typed or handwritten letters are second in effectiveness only to office visits. They are much better than emails, and thousands of times more effective than signatures on on-line petitions. So please take 15 minutes to **write to Oregon U.S. Senators, Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden**, asking them to vigorously press for troop returns. The address for both is **U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510**. And send one to **Greg Walden at U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515**. See sample letters below.

According to the U.S.-Iraq Status of Forces Agreement entered into by the Bush Administration and the Iraq government in November, 2008, all U.S. forces are supposed to be out by the end of this year. Needless to say, the Obama Administration is working hard to pressure Iraq into modifying the agreement. So, our messages on Iraq should be: live up to the agreement; all troops out of Iraq by December 31; no permanent bases.

As for Afghanistan, we will never achieve our announced goal, which is to build a strong central government that will assure that no terrorists can operate on Afghan soil. There is no "winning" there despite what Secretary of State Leon Panetta said at the memorial service for the dead SEALs in Florida. Like every other imperialist power, the U.S. has discovered that Afghanistan is a quagmire. So, our messages on Afghanistan should be: Osama is dead; al Qaeda in Afghanistan is as reduced as it can be; no other goal can be achieved; time to come home.

Sample letter to Sen. Merkley:

I want to thank you for your leadership in Congressional efforts to bring ALL our troops home from Iraq and Afghanistan without delay. Please know that your constituents recognize and support your efforts, so don't allow the White House to dissuade you in the name of party loyalty. A large majority of people in this nation have turned against our "wars of choice," and if democracy were functioning correctly, both the Administration and Congress would be doing what you are.

Sample letter to Sen. Wyden:

You know that no more lives and treasure should be wasted in our Wars of Choice in Iraq and Afghanistan. But it's important that you show leadership on this matter, not just think right and vote right when you have the chance. Congress must force an unwilling White House to withdraw all troops from Iraq by the end of this year, in accord with the Bush-al Maliki agreement of 2008, and remove all bases. It must also insist on a much faster timetable for withdrawing troops from the quagmire that Afghanistan has always proved for outside invaders. So I urge you to get out front on this matter—speaking out boldly and joining with other Senators to bring ALL the troops home NOW.

Sample letter to Rep. Walden:

The vast majority of Americans are sick of spending our lives and our tax money on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. We must bring ALL our troops home NOW. No residual forces, no permanent bases. These occupations by an outside foreign power only inflames sentiment against the United States and breeds terrorism. So please show that there is still a democracy in this country by voting for the will of the people, not for a permanent war economy that is weakening us at home.