

Between February 5 and April 17 (Tax Day), over 320 arrests occurred in the offices of 39 Representatives and Senators, including Senators Durbin and Obama.. The campaign spread nationally, with campaigns taking place in over 25 states from Portland, Maine to Portland, Oregon and from Fairbanks, Alaska to Huntsville, Alabama.

On August 6, 2007 a reinvigorated Occupation Project campaign was launched with acts of nonviolent civil disobedience / civil resistance and office occupations occurring through at least the end of October.

The demand of the campaign is simple. Representatives and Senators: Publicly commit to voting against any funding for the Iraq war or we will nonviolently occupy your offices.

For info on the Nonviolent Occupation Project, see www.vcnv.org

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THE LIE THAT KEEPS THE OCCUPATION OF IRAQ GOING

Last November, Americans voted to end the illegal and immoral occupation of Iraq by electing a Democratic majority in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. The idea was that Democrats would cut funds for the occupation which would force president Bush to bring the troops home.

Democrats have passed funding bills which include a timetable for withdrawal of US troops, but President Bush vetoed each of these bills. Democrats say they have been unable to muster enough votes (67 in the Senate) to over ride Bush vetoes. As a result, most Democrats in both houses of Congress agree to vote for funding bills, *without timetables for withdrawal*, because they say they do not want to cut supplies and equipment necessary for the safety of US troops.



Because of this rationale, Senate Democrats voted overwhelmingly for an additional \$150 Billion for war funding on October 1, 2007. Obama was absent. Thankfully, this bill merely “authorizes” the money to be spent but it does not guarantee it. Congress must pass a separate “appropriations” bill before war funds are transferred to military coffers.

Still the occupation goes on: 3,800+ U.S. soldiers killed, over 20,000 wounded, many seriously. 1,000,000 Iraqis killed, untold numbers injured with little if any medical care available. 4,000,000 Iraqis are refugees. Much of Iraq and its culture destroyed. The U.S. has spent \$460 billion on the invasion / occupation at the expense of health care, education, transportation and housing at home.

THE BIG LIE

It is a lie that Congress must pass a bill to end the occupation of Iraq. The occupation can be ended with an announcement by Congressional leaders that there will be no more funding. Should someone offer a proposal to fund the war, Democrats can block it in several ways.

For example, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid could, if they wanted, announce today that the House and Senate will no longer bring to a vote any bills to fund anything other than withdrawal of the troops. They have many colleagues already on board with that position, not to mention two thirds of the country.

In the House, a bill cannot come to the floor for a vote without Pelosi's approval unless 218 representatives sign, what is called, "a discharge petition" to force the bill to the floor. It is unlikely enough House Democrats would oppose their party to fund Bush's war in that way. (The house is composed of 435 representatives: 233 Democrats and 202 Republicans.)

In the Senate, Reid alone could refuse to bring a bill to the floor, or another senator could put a secret hold on a bill.

Should either of these methods fail and a funding bill comes to the floor for a vote, Senate Democrats could tie up the bill by conducting a Filibuster. A filibuster is an extended debate upon a proposal in order to delay or completely prevent a vote on its passage. It takes a super-majority, three-fifths of the Senate (60 Senators, if all 100 seats are filled) to bring a debate to a close. Thus, just 41 votes in the Senate would block any attempt by those in the Senate who wish to continue funding the war.

ANOTHER LIE

To further justify their support of war funding, members of Congress use their supposed concern for U.S. troops as a human shield. They are hiding behind soldiers and the threat that if they cut off funds U.S. soldiers would wake up tomorrow and not have food, water, or even funds to pull out.

This is also a lie. The Pentagon does not live paycheck to paycheck like working people do. The budget and supply process is decided months and years in advance. There is a long supply chain – planning and allocation are known many months in advance.

Bush has billions of dollars for withdrawal in the pipeline and could be given more for that exclusive purpose.

So, when Democrats say they are voting to protect the troops or that they don't have the votes to end the occupation, they are lying to you.

For more info on funding, see *End the War - Keep War Funding Off The Floor!* at http://encampmentstoptothewar.blogspot.com/2007/09/end-war-keep-war-funding-off-floor_22.html

and *Congress Ignoring Critical Report on Pentagon Spending* http://www.truthout.org/docs_2006/101007J.shtml

ACTIONS

1. Call your Representative and Senators and demand that they use their influence to steer the House and the Senate along the lines indicated above AND to vote only for funding to bring the troops home.

To reach them, call the Congressional switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask for them by name. If you don't know who they are, tell the operator your zip code and s/he will connect you to the appropriate persons.

2. Join THE OCCUPATION PROJECT

On February 5, 2007 Voices for Creative Nonviolence launched the Occupation Project, a campaign of sustained nonviolent civil disobedience aimed at ending funding for the U.S. occupation of Iraq. CODEPINK, Declaration of Peace, Veterans for Peace and other national organizations joined in organizing the campaign.