

Dear MoveOn member,

I'm John Bruhns and I served in Baghdad as an army sergeant for the first year of the war. Within my first days there, I realized that so much of what I had been told--about weapons of mass destruction, connections to 9/11--was just White House spin to sell the war.

I'm seeing the same thing all over again now. Even with this being the bloodiest summer for US troops in Iraq, even with Iraqi casualties running at twice the pace of last year, and even with 15 of 18 of President Bush's own benchmarks unmet, the White House is at it again. They're telling us that black is white, up is down, and things in Iraq are going just great thanks to the troop "surge."

This month Congress is going to vote on war policy for the next year--and Bush is hoping all this "progress" talk will scare Congress away from voting for withdrawal. We can't let that happen. Almost 4,000 US troops have died. We've spent half a trillion dollars in Iraq. Every day you turn on the news and more people are killed. We need Congress to stand up and fight to bring our troops home this fall.

I need your help to make sure that happens. Can you sign this petition demanding that Congress begin a fully funded redeployment and start bringing our troops home from Iraq immediately? I'll deliver your comments to Congress myself next week. Clicking below will add your name:

<http://pol.moveon.org/troopshome/o.pl?id=11180-8505232-qVnIF2&t=4>

I left Iraq on February 27, 2004 and from what I hear from my friends who are still there--many on their third or fourth deployments--it's worse now than ever before. The "surge" was a failure and it's time to draw down our troops.

This president can't be trusted, his policy is reckless and it's more and more dangerous every day.

Here's what's happened in Iraq since the escalation went into effect.

- * Violence has gone up in Iraq. This summer is on track to be one of the bloodiest summers for Iraqis and U.S. troops, with nearly twice as many U.S. troops killed this July than the previous July. 1
- * The surge has not created political stability. The central premise of the surge was that it would increase political stability. Two years after Sunnis were brought into the political transition, a Sunni bloc

withdrew from the government. 2 This week's original Government Accountability Office report showed that 15 out of 18 of Bush's own political benchmarks remain unmet. 3

- * We've poured weapons into Iraq's civil war. Another Government Accountability Office report earlier this summer showed that the Pentagon lost track of nearly 200,000 weapons given to Iraqis. We distribute weapons and then they disappear and we don't know what happens to them. What we do know is that violence increases--both among Iraqi sectarian groups and against American troops. 4
- * Ethnic cleansing is happening in Baghdad. The once Sunni dominated city is now dominated by Shiites. Here is a quote from the most recent Newsweek: "When Gen. David Petraeus goes before Congress next week to report on the progress of the surge, he may cite a decline in insurgent attacks in Baghdad as one marker of success. In fact, part of the reason behind the decline is how far the Shiite militias' cleansing of Baghdad has progressed: they've essentially won." 5

As an Iraq war veteran I felt so much relief after the November of 2006 election--I felt like we would finally end this mess and start bringing our troops home from Iraq. I've been let down a lot over this last year and I want to do everything I can to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Congress has the power to force redeployment and they have to use that power this fall. Nothing is more important to me than making sure we start bringing all our troops home--and I need your help to make sure that's what happens.

Please sign the petition today.

<http://pol.moveon.org/troopshome/o.pl?id=11180-8505232-qVnIF2&t=5>

Thanks for all you do.

--John Bruhns, former US Army Infantry Sergeant.
Wednesday, September 5th, 2007

Sources:

1. "Diplomatic Surge for Iraq, But New Steps Require Credible Redeployment Plan for U.S. Forces," Center for American Progress, August 9, 2007
<http://www.moveon.org/r?r=2929&id=11180-8505232-qVnIF2&t=6>

2. Ibid

3. "Report Finds Little Progress On Iraq Goals," Washington Post, August 30, 2007

<http://www.moveon.org/r?r=2930&id=11180-8505232-qVnIF2&t=7>

4. "Stabilizing Iraq," United States Government Accountability Office, July 2007

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d07711.pdf>

5. "Baghdad's New Owners," Newsweek, September 10, 2007

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/20546328/site/newsweek>

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