
Documentation

Kennedy Bill To Reassert Congress's Power Over War

In a speech to at the National Press Club in Washington Jan. 9, Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) announced that he was introducing a bill requiring the Congress to vote before the President escalates troops levels in Iraq, and to reassert Congressional authority over the Iraq War, as required by Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. We reprint a summary of the legislation as it appears on Senator Kennedy's website.

The legislation claims the people's right to a full voice in the President's plan to send more troops into the Iraq civil war. It says that no funds can be spent to send additional troops to Iraq unless Congress approves the President's proposed escalation of American forces.

The Iraq War Resolution of 2002 authorized a war against the regime of Saddam Hussein because he was believed to have weapons of mass destruction and an operational relationship with al-Qaeda, and was in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions.

The mission of our armed forces today in Iraq no longer bears any resemblance to the mission authorized by Congress.

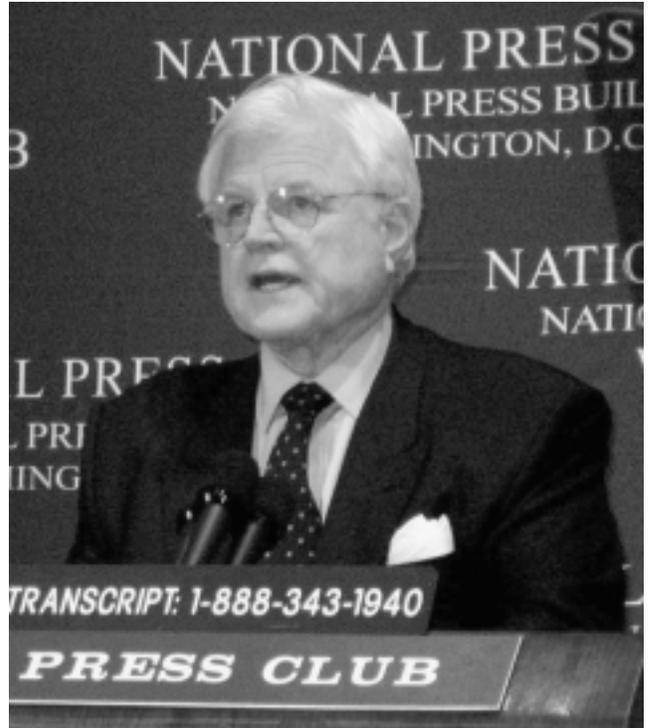
Iraq has descended into civil war, and sectarian violence continues to escalate.

On March 5, 2006, General Nash said, "We're in a civil war now; it's just that not everybody's joined in."

On Dec. 3, 2006, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said, "When we had the strife in Lebanon and other places, we called that a civil war—this is much worse."

On Dec. 17, 2006, former Secretary of State Colin Powell said, "I am not persuaded that another surge of troops into Baghdad for the purposes of suppressing the communitarian violence, this civil war, will work."

Iraq needs a political solution, not a military solution. The open-ended commitment of our military forces continues to enable the Iraqis to avoid taking responsibility for their own future. Tens of thousands of additional U.S. troops will only make the Iraqis more dependent on America, not less.



EIRNS/William Jones

Sen. Ted Kennedy speaks at the National Press Club on Jan. 9. His proposed legislation states that the President should not be permitted to increase U.S. troops in Iraq "without a specific new authorization from Congress."

On Nov. 15, 2006, General Abizaid was unequivocal in stating that increasing our troop commitment is not the answer. He said, "I've met with every divisional commander. General Casey, the corps commander, General Dempsey—we all talked together, and I said, "in your professional opinion, if we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq? And they all said no."

On Dec. 29, 2006, General Casey said, "The longer we in the U.S. [armed] forces continue to bear the main burden of Iraq's security, it lengthens the time that the government of Iraq has to take the hard decisions about reconciliation and dealing with the militias. . . . They can continue to blame us for all of Iraq's problems, which are at base their problems."

More than 3,000 American soldiers have died in Iraq, and more than 22,000 have been wounded. America cannot wait for the next President to resolve the problems in Iraq. A military escalation in Iraq would not strengthen our national security.

President Bush should not be permitted to increase the number of United States troops in harm's way in the civil war without a specific new authorization from Congress.

The legislation requires a vote before funds are spent to deploy more troops and escalate our military presence. It does not cut off funding for our troops already in Iraq.