

## FUND HUMAN NEEDS, NOT WAR!

The invasion of Iraq and the US occupation has killed an estimated 655,000 to 1.1 million Iraqi civilians. More than 4,100 US troops have also been killed.

Beyond the human cost, the Iraq War has cost the country more than \$554 billion dollars and may eventually cost \$3 trillion according to Nobel Prize winner Joseph Stiglitz.

Republican John McCain continues to support the ongoing occupation claiming that the US is achieving “victory” in Iraq even as the US policy is based on collective punishment, imprisonment, and the subjugation of the Iraqi people.

Democrat Barack Obama also supports the ongoing occupation of Iraq. While he has the reputation of being “antiwar,” he advocates removing only “combat troops” on a non-binding timetable. He intends to keep private military contractors and an unknown number of soldiers in the country to fight “terrorist” elements.

In an election in which “change” has become a buzz word, neither major party candidate is offering a substantive change in Iraq.

Given this reality, it is up to us—the people who politicians claim to represent—to hold politicians accountable and demand that they end the US occupation of Iraq. By immediately ending the occupation—which many Iraqis want—the US could redirect much of the spending towards human needs.

For example, in the 3rd Congressional District—which includes Grand Rapids—we have spent \$1.2 billion on the war. That money could have provided healthcare for 442,000 people for one year, provided 121,000 people with one-year university scholarships, or built 9,488 affordable housing units.

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# US OUT OF IRAQ NOW

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