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From: paul kawika martin [pmartin@peace-action.org]

Sent: Wednesday, May 23, 2007 9:20 AM

Subject: Iraq/Iran Coordinating Committee Meeting Notes-Next Meeting: June 8, 2:30 PM – 4:00 PM in a House Office Building TBA

Dear Staffer and Leaders:

Attached and pasted below are the Iraq/Iran Coordinating Committee notes from last Friday focused on Iraq/Iran legislative strategy with input from congressional staff and leaders from NGO's working on bringing our troops home from Iraq and stopping military intervention in Iran. **Next meeting will be on Friday, June 8, 2:30 PM 4:00 PM in a House Office Building TBA (meeting are every three weeks).**

These notes are to help many of us who work on the Iraq and Iran issues. That said, please be very judicious and only forward these notes as necessary if at all.

Thank you,

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Iraq/Iran Coordinating Committee Meeting Notes

With members and staff of the Congressional Progressive Caucus,

Out of Iraq Caucus and peace movement leaders.

Thanks to Katherine Fuchs of Peace Action for taking notes. These notes are to help many of us on this list who work on the hill on the Iraq issue. That said, please be very judicious and only forward these notes as necessary if at all.

1. Attendance: Rachel DuBois (*Friends Committee on National Legislation*), Fran Middleberg (*Military Families Speak Out*), Ellen Barfield (*Veterans for Peace*), Marcia Jansen (*Democracy Rising*), Denice Lombard (*U.S. Labor Against War*), Mark Harrison (*United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society*), Morgan Gregson (*NETWORK*), Jim Fine (*Friends Committee on National Legislation*), Sue Udry (*United for Peace and Justice*), Melissa Bryne (*Win Without War*), Aura Kanegis (*American Friends Service Committee*), Babak Talebi (*National Iranian American Council*), Paul Kawika Martin (*Peace Action*), Katherine Fuchs (*Peace Action Education Fund*), Bill Goold (*Congressional Progressive Caucus*)

2. Develop and Implement Long-Term Legislative Strategy

a. Iraq Recent news

i. McGovern's 2237: failed w/ 171 ayes (2 Republicans: Duncan & Paul) more than we expected ☺

ii. Feingold Amendment: failed with 29 ayes

iii. Petition by Iraqi Parliamentarians: states that there should be a timeline for U.S. withdrawal, doesn't mention when but says that there needs to be clarity about the need for U.S. withdrawal from Iraq. The Iraqi cabinet is trying to sweep this under the rug. This petition is basically analogous to a sense of congress resolution; it may be turned into a bill in the future. Time for a political solution is running out & if we don't salvage hope for this kind of solution the civil society/government that's there now *will* dissipate.

b. Iraq Goal: Bring all troops home from Iraq as soon as possible with no permanent bases and significant reconstruction/reparations funds to the Iraqi people

i. Pressure 59 House Dems and a dozen key Republicans who voted against McGovern's 2237.

1. MoveOn is taking out radio ads to push Hoyer (who voted No).

2. McNeerney voted No this is an unpleasant surprise. The progressives had to do their own whipping on McGovern. Rahm Emanuel was asking freshman to vote no on 2237. Should a delegation of our organizations meet with Emanuel? Perhaps we need to engage in a campaign to educate the freshmen; in-district pressure is probably going to be the best way to address this issue a recess program? Sue seems to have volunteered to get something like this together for the Memorial Day recess.

3. Iraqi Labor Tour may be trying to pressure some of wayward Dems.

4. Pressure all but 29 Senators (up from only 13 who voted with us last year) Tester, Webb & Levin need guidance.

5. It's a good sign that all the presidential hopefuls voted with us.

6. MoveOn will target Sen. Levin (radio ads). Apparently Levin likes benchmarks & this bill didn't have them, it was a big surprise to all of us that he voted wrong.

ii. Supplemental

1. meeting with White House staff & Dem leadership to work on compromise. Offered to same legislation that passed in house without pork *or* timetabled supp w/ presidential waiver White House rejected both of these ideas.

2. Dems seem hell-bent on getting this thing finished by Memorial Day.

3. Its unlikely that we are going to like the supplemental that ends up passing, as the White House is super far from where we want to be, the Senate is far from where we want to be & the House isnt exactly where wed like either.
 4. We dont like the most recently proposed benchmarks; all they really do is blame the Iraqis, which is totally inappropriate & not helpful.
- iii. House Legislative Strategy: Lee, Waters and Woolseys 508 (51 cosponsors), Murthas 18 (103 cosponsors), McGoverns 746 (26 cosponsors)
- iv. DoD FY08 budget authorization in House: Lee, Waters, Woolsey offered good amendments on funding withdrawal & other good stuff, but they were all blocked by the Rules Committee. (total >\$700billion; \$508 for the defense authorization + \$200bill on top of that)
1. King Amendment (to undo Lees no permanent bases language which has already passed) failed, but with a very narrow margin (209-219), it was pretty much a party-line vote. This is a troubling sign.
- v. Appropriations: Theres nothing reliable about the Murtha bill, which hes holding it up until supplemental is finished
- vi. Senate Legislative Strategy: Feingolds S.121 & S.448 (each have 3 cosponsors, Boxer, Leahy & Sanders)
- vii. Reconstruction and Development
1. Iraq peace & Development Working Group (convened by NETWORK). Meeting w/ Pelosi, Byrd, Obey & others in appropriations leadership positions; trying to ensure that good reconstruction/development money thats already been authorized/supped isnt tied to benchmarks.
 2. This group meets monthly & has a listserv email mgregson@networklobby.org or Simone (scampbell@networklobby.org) to get added to this list.
- viii. Denice is working on getting congressional briefings set up for the Iraqi labor leaders who will be touring in the next few weeks hopefully get some education in on the Iraqi Oil Law. The [flyer for the DC events is available at this link](#) and attached to the end of these notes.
- ix. In district visits May 28-June1.
- x. Summer swarm (ask sue for better notes), meeting at IPS. Will attempt to educate members of Congress about Iraqi Oil Law. www.democracyrisingus.org or www.grassrootsdemocracy4us.org for swarm info
- xi. Win Without War is doing editorial board meetings & town hall meetings in NH with retired generals about why its important to get out of Iraq focus on Sununu. Sununu is

really into the idea that there will be massive slaughter if we pull out of Iraq, we need to address that concern if we want to move him.

xii. Lee, Woolsey & Waters will be going to Iowa, NH & SC over the summer for town hall meetings to make sure that presidential candidates hear their message.

xiii. Mark wants to know how we can talk to the Republican base about the war.

xiv. MFSO is concerned about where the Democratic base stands on the war. Concerned that were not pushing (hard enough) for defunding the war.

xv. Iraq media/Communications/Message

c. Iran Recent News

i. Haleh Esfandiari, of the Woodrow Wilson Center, has been held in Tehran since December.

ii. Babysteps in dialogue

iii. 24th deadline on sanctions/centrifuges & claims of enrichment success. El-Baredi has recently said that they do have 1800 centrifuges going.

iv. Lantos legislation has been moving forward: Frank has thus far refused to bring up 1400 & 957 (removing presidential waiver for ISA sanctions), instead it looks like were getting a sunshine bill to publicize traders & to be used in divestment campaigns.

v. Unfortunately it looks like divestment is rolling right along in statehouses. Sanctions & Divestment seem to have replaced bombing as the U.S. strategy toward Iran, however thats not necessarily safer as these strategies will destroy opportunities for dialogue & allow Bush & co. to say, we tried dialogue & it didnt work, now lets bomb. [Talking points from the National Iranian American Council are attached via this link as well as at the end of these notes.](#)

d. Iran Goal: Prevent military action and sanctions.

i. Peace Action Iran petition <http://www.peace-action.org/iranpetition.html> with Just Foreign Policy, Council for a Livable World and others using language.

ii. Senate (Byrd, Sanders and Webb) and House (Lantos) Language on no use of force

iii. Senate Strategy: Byrd S39 (1 cosponsor Sanders) and Sanders S.Con.Res.13

iv. DeFazio Amendment to Defense Authorization failed with 133 ayes (7 GOP). Andrews Amendment failed 202-216 (6 GOP voting aye). There were other Iran amendments (9 total), but most of them didnt make it out of Rules Committee.

v. Lantos mark-up in Armed Services next week for condemning Iran/Holocaust stuff & something about the UN

vi. House Strategy: Lees H.R.770 (17 cosponsors), Jones H.J.Res.14 (62 cosponsors, Murtha & 6

republicans), DeFazio 33 (53 cosponsors)

vii. Sanctions: oppose S970 & H.R.1400 & Divestment

viii. Dialogue Caucus Reps. Meeks & Gilchrest (13 members)

ix. Iran Messaging Resources (Ira Shorr, ishorr@psr.org) <http://www.peaceadsecurityinitiative.org>

x. Iran Policy Working Group Email List for NGO leaders, staffers and experts (IranPWG-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).


3. Who else should be around the table?

a. African American/Latino organizations (NAACP invited, LULAC, National Council of La Raza)

b. Jewish Orgs Brit Tzedek v'Shalom will be joining us at future meetings

4. Next meeting: June 8th 2:30pm in a House office building.

5. Churches for Middle East Peace (www.wmep.org) just had a lobby day; theyll be good folks to contact when planning the June 11th lobby activities.

 Right-click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of this picture from the Internet.

NIAC Talking Points on Iran Sanctions

- Sanctions undermine diplomacy. Right when the two sides finally have started to talk, sanctions will likely spoil this window of opportunity for diplomacy.
- Members of Congress and other leaders have rightfully criticized the Bush administration for not pursuing diplomacy without preconditions with Iran for more than six years. When the Bush White House finally is taking some small steps towards diplomacy, Congress should not undermine this process by seeking to impose unilateral sanctions.

- During the Clinton Administration, sanctions prevented diplomacy from taking place. Today, sanctions will play a similar spoiling role with one crucial difference: The stakes are much higher and the need for diplomacy is much greater.
- Sanctions are not a new policy. Iran has been under US sanctions for more than 25 years. They are an ineffective, failed and flawed policy that has only contributed to the challenges that Iran poses to the US.
- Containment and unilateral sanctions are not the answer to the stand-off with Iran. Sanctions will continue to push Iran into a corner, where it will be less likely to negotiate and more likely to act out against the US.
- Because sanctions undermine diplomacy, they also significantly increase the risk of war.
- In the past, groups that have favored confrontation between Iran and US have closed small windows of opportunity for diplomacy by pushing to sanction Iran.