

Post-invasion Iraq / United States should increase troop levels

< Post-invasion Iraq

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For more information, see the Wikipedia article "Iraq troop surge of 2007"

Position: United States should increase troop levels

This position addresses the topic Post-invasion Iraq.

For this position

“ But the calls for more troops in Iraq come from soldiers training Iraqis, from soldiers trying to secure Baghdad, from soldiers in Anbar. [...] The truth is there are not enough ground forces in Iraq, and military officers are finally saying so in public.” ”

From More Troops, by Frederick W. Kagan, William Kristol (*The Weekly Standard*, September 27, 2006) (view)

“ The cause of Iraq's dramatic death toll is easy to diagnose. There are not enough good guys with guns to keep the bad guys at bay. The United States and its allies need to send more troops.” ”

From Send more troops: Iraq must be secured, by New Hampshire Union Leader editorial board (*New Hampshire Union Leader*, September 15, 2006) (view)

“ The administration deserves credit for the strides it has made in training the Iraqi army. But for now we have to do much of the holding ourselves for it to be effective. That simply requires more manpower.” ”

From Reinforce Baghdad, by William Kristol, Rich Lowry (*The Washington Post*, September 12, 2006) (view)

“ America is fighting with a hand tied behind its back. Soldiers have all the equipment we need -- armored humvees, body armor for every body part, superior technology, etc. -- but we simply do not have enough troops in Iraq, and we need them now.” ”

From More Troops, Please, by Pete Hegseth (*The Wall Street Journal*, October 3, 2006) (view)

“ The number of troops currently in Iraq is less than 140,000. That's roughly as many soldiers as Britain sent to the same country to defeat an insurgency in 1920 — at a time when the population of Iraq was a tenth of what it is today.” ”

From There are 300m Americans, but still not enough to rule the world, by Niall Ferguson (*The Daily Telegraph*, October 22, 2006) (view)

“ “The only real hope of restoring order in the short term is to send American reinforcements. Unfortunately, pacifying the entire country would probably require 400,000 to 500,000 troops, an obvious nonstarter. A smaller number — 25,000 to 50,000 — might suffice to control Baghdad, but, in the current political climate, it seems unlikely that even that many will be sent.” ”

From Many dead ends in Iraq, by Max Boot (*Los Angeles Times*, November 8, 2006) (view)

“ “If you are going to secure Baghdad, secure Baghdad. We announced over the summer with great fanfare a plan to secure Baghdad, but never devoted enough troops to make it remotely plausible. In August 2003 there were 140,000 troops in Iraq, as there were in August 2004, August 2005 and August 2006.” ”

From Against Half-Measures, by Rich Lowry (*National Review*, November 7, 2006) (view)

“ “The U.S. military has never set itself the goal of establishing and maintaining security. It has always prioritized training Iraqi forces and allowing them to undertake such operations on their own. This strategy might have had some merit when the principal problem in Iraq was the Sunni Arab insurgency (although it was dubious even then). It has little or no merit today, when sectarian violence is the most important challenge.” ”

From We Can Put More Forces in Iraq..., by Frederick W. Kagan (*The Weekly Standard*, November 23, 2006) (view)

“ “When U.S. forces in adequate numbers, together with Iraqi troops, cleared Tal Afar, Mosul, Falluja, Sadr City, and Najaf in 2004 and 2005, levels of violence in those areas dropped enormously. Economic activity picked up. Political leaders, rather than militia commanders, took charge. We know what success looks like, and we know what it demands--more U.S. troops, operating together with such Iraqi forces as are available, to establish security above all else.” ”

From Time for a Heavier Footprint, by Frederick W. Kagan, William Kristol (*The Weekly Standard*, November 20, 2006) (view)

“ “Iraq is not an unwinnable war: Rather, as the data just cited show, it is a war we have chosen not to win. And the difference between success and failure is not 300,000 more soldiers, as some would have it. One-tenth that number would make a large difference, and has done so in the past. One-sixth would likely prove decisive.” ”

From Doubling Down in Iraq, by William J. Stuntz (*The Weekly Standard*, November 13, 2006) (view)

“ “In Iraq, American policies have steadily undermined the Iraqi people's confidence that the United States has either the will or capacity to provide them the security they need and deserve. So they have turned to their own sectarian armed groups for the protection the Bush administration has failed to provide. That, and not historical inevitability or the alleged failings of the Iraqi people, is what has brought Iraq closer to civil war.” ”

From Bush's Iraq Legacy, by Robert Kagan, William Kristol (*The Weekly Standard*, November 13, 2006) (view)

“ "Instead of looking for a face-saving way to lose in Iraq, President Bush could finally demand of his top advisers a strategy to succeed: provide the US force levels necessary to achieve even minimal political objectives. This could begin by increasing US troops in Iraq by at least 50,000 in order to clear and hold Baghdad without shifting troops from other parts of Iraq." ”

From Bush must call for reinforcements in Iraq, by Robert Kagan, William Kristol (*Financial Times*, November 12, 2006) (view)

“ "By now it should be obvious that the "light footprint" approach has not worked. It has increased, not decreased, resentment of the United States because Iraqis are aggrieved by the breakdown of law and order. Yet there appears to be no serious rethinking of this flawed strategy at either the Pentagon or the White House." ”

From Staying the wrong course in Iraq, by Max Boot (*Los Angeles Times*, June 28, 2006) (view)

“ "For all of these reasons, we hope Mr. Bush also refrains from using the words "surge" or "temporary" to describe his plans this week. A better message is that he will do whatever it takes to reinforce the forces of moderation and democracy in Iraq to prevent a defeat that would empower American enemies in Iraq and in the war on terror." ”

From A Heavier Iraq 'Footprint', by The Wall Street Journal editorial board (*The Wall Street Journal*, January 8, 2007) (view)

“ "We have one caveat with the Keane/Kagan plan. Given the violent, unpredictable nature of Iran and evidence of its role in arming both Shi'ite and Sunni terrorists in Iraq, it may be that more than 18-24 months and more than 30,000 additional troops will be required to secure Baghdad." ”

From Fingers in the wind, by The Washington Times editorial board (*The Washington Times*, January 8, 2007) (view)

“ "Contrary to popular notions that U.S. troops are getting "caught in the crossfire" between Sunni and Shiite fighters and are therefore ineffective in suppressing the incipient civil war, the record of U.S. troops in stopping sectarian violence is excellent. Where American soldiers have deployed to areas in turmoil, including Baghdad neighborhoods, the violence has ceased almost immediately." ”

From Send More Troops, by John McCain (*The Washington Post*, January 7, 2007) (view)

“ "If the president commits the necessary resources along the lines recommended by Keane-Kagan, the radicalization of Iraq can likely be reversed. The political and democratic possibilities in Mesopotamia remain greater than most in Washington's foreign policy establishment imagine." ”

From The Consequences of Failure in Iraq (Gerecht), by Reuel Marc Gerecht (*The Weekly Standard*, January 6, 2007) (view)

“ "Enemies of the United States will take heart from several resolutions currently under consideration in the Senate, which may be voted on as early as today. Two of them oppose President Bush's proposal for a 20,000 troop strong "surge" of U.S. troops into Iraq, the cornerstone of Mr. Bush's newly unveiled plan for dealing with the sectarian violence in Baghdad and for securing the country's stability and democratic future." ”

From Iraq is no 'Nam, by Helle Dale (*The Washington Times*, January 31, 2007) (view)

“ "The British contingent recently demonstrated that such overwhelming tactics have their effect. After their surprise move into Basra with massed columns of fighting vehicles and Challenger tanks, they succeeded in dominating the chosen area and evoking respect from the local militias. In any case, the sending of such force will be a necessary preliminary to any reduction in strength, since it would be necessary to cover the withdrawal." ”

From 50,000 more US troops can save Iraq, by John Keegan (*The Daily Telegraph*, January 3, 2007) (view)

“ "As Gen. David Petraeus, the new commander of our forces in Iraq, explained in hearings before Congress last week, reinforcing U.S. troops is necessary for this new plan to succeed. Any plan that limits our ability to reinforce our troops in the field is a plan for failure -- and could hand Baghdad to terrorists and extremists before legitimate Iraqi forces are ready to take over the fight." ”

From Baghdad Is Key, by Stephen J. Hadley (*The Washington Post*, January 29, 2007) (view)

“ "But Petraeus says the troop surge is necessary to conduct the mission assigned him by the president - and, we say again, implicitly ratified by the Senate when it confirmed the officer's assignment. How can anyone suggest that trying to deny the field commander the resources he says he needs - or seeking to undermine popular support for that mission - is anything other than a prescription for defeat? " ”

From Betraying America, by New York Post editorial board (*New York Post*, January 28, 2007) (view)

“ "The fact is that President Bush has, as he was widely and correctly urged to do, changed strategy. He's put a new commander, General Petraeus, in charge. Petraeus thinks the new plan can work, with the support of additional troops. He'll be confirmed by the Senate and sent out to the theater this week. Members of Congress should ask themselves, "What can we do to help Petraeus succeed?" " ”

From All We Are Saying... Is Give Petraeus a Chance, by Frederick W. Kagan, William Kristol (*The Weekly Standard*, January 22, 2007) (view)

“ "This is a classic counterinsurgency approach focused on securing the populace, and it has never really been tried before in the capital. It could work, especially if the surge is long lasting and if it's coupled with other vital steps — such as increasing the number of American advisors in the Iraqi security forces, instituting a biometric identity card to make it easier to detain terrorism suspects and enhancing the capacity of the Iraqi legal system to incarcerate more violent offenders." ”

From No better idea, by Max Boot (*Los Angeles Times*, January 17, 2007) (view)

“ "But will 21,000 new troops be enough to do the job? Gen. Keane and Mr. Kagan had proposed a minimum of 30,000. If the president is correct (and I think it is indisputable) that failure in Iraq would permit "radical Islamic extremists to grow in strength and gain new recruits," permit Iran to pursue nuclear weapons, allow Islamists to topple moderate governments and funnel oil wealth to terrorists for attacks against U.S. targets, why is the surge so modest?" ”

From Are we doing enough?, by Mona Charen (*The Washington Times*, January 15, 2007) (view)

“ "To be sure, adding 21,500 American troops (and having them conduct classic counterinsurgency operations) is not a huge change and may be too late. But it would still be counterintuitive for the president's critics to prevent him from carrying out the very policy they have collectively recommended." ”

From A Skeptic's Case For the Surge, by Michael O'Hanlon (*The Washington Post*, January 14, 2007) (view)

“ "Will it succeed? I don't know and neither do you and neither does anybody else. But it is this country's last, best, and only hope of prevailing in Iraq." ”

From Noble effort our only alternative to awful defeat, by John Podhoretz (*New York Post*, January 11, 2007) (view)

“ "To a soldier, the most encouraging thing the president said last night was that there had been "too many restrictions" on our troops in the past. Rules of engagement must be loosened. We have to stop playing Barney Fife and fight." ”

From W's Last Chance, by Ralph Peters (*New York Post*, January 11, 2007) (view)

“ "Mr Bush's decision involves serious risks and it is inevitable that more American soldiers will die as a result of being sent to dangerous sections of Baghdad. Nor is this destined to be a wildly popular announcement at home. It is right, nevertheless, to make one more effort to create the sort of Iraq that its people deserve and the vast majority of its citizens aspire to." ”

From A Shift not a Surge, by The Times editorial board (*The Times*, January 11, 2007) (view)

“ "This much is clear: If sending more troops to Baghdad is successful, it will be far less expensive in the long run than permitting Iraq to collapse." ”

From Stabilize Iraq, by The Washington Times editorial board (*The Washington Times*, January 10, 2007) (view)

“ "Maybe it's too late to avoid the catastrophe that Byman and Pollack warn of. But Yugoslavia showed how much good a decisive intervention could do. The case for action — for sending more troops rather than withdrawing the ones already there — is even stronger in Iraq because we have caused its current turmoil and cannot escape its consequences." ”

From Is Iraq turning into Yugoslavia?, by Max Boot (*Los Angeles Times*, February 21, 2007) (view)

“ "Of the many disappointments of the Iraq Study Group's report, none is greater than the failure (or was it unwillingness?) to offer any remotely plausible suggestions for bringing security and stability to significant parts of Iraq. The Baker group instead chose to entertain the fantasy that political reconciliation in Iraq can take place in the absence of basic security for the average Iraqi." ”

From It's Up To Bush, by Robert Kagan, William Kristol (*The Weekly Standard*, December 8,

2006) (view)

“ "American Enterprise Institute scholar Frederick Kagan argues persuasively that more resources combined with a different military strategy will be necessary to improve the situation. His research suggests that another 50,000 to 80,000 troops would enable the U.S. military to combat the terrorist armies now roiling in Baghdad without drawing forces away from Anbar and other dangerous parts of the country." ”

From More troops needed, by The Washington Times editorial board (*The Washington Times*, December 6, 2006) (view)

“ "And absent adoption of the McCain policy -- a substantial increase in forces -- America's waning influence on events may derive from the increasing likelihood that the scant protection that American forces now provide will be withdrawn." ”

From America's Moral Duty in Iraq, by George F. Will (*The Washington Post*, December 4, 2006) (view)

“ "After speaking with our military commanders and soldiers there, I strongly believe that additional U.S. troops must be deployed to Baghdad and Anbar province -- an increase that will at last allow us to establish security throughout the Iraqi capital, hold critical central neighborhoods in the city, clamp down on the insurgency and defeat al-Qaeda in that province." ”

From Why We Need More Troops in Iraq, by Joe Lieberman (*The Washington Post*, December 29, 2006) (view)

“ "We need to cut through the confusion. Bringing security to Baghdad -- the essential precondition for political compromise, national reconciliation and economic development -- is possible only with a surge of at least 30,000 combat troops lasting 18 months or so. Any other option is likely to fail." ”

From The Right Type of 'Surge', by Jack Keane, Frederick W. Kagan (*The Washington Post*, December 27, 2006) (view)

“ "The war fighters became political scientists. They trusted their theories about Iraq and their sense of how best to build up a country, rather than narrowing their task to bringing the enemy to heel and securing the country. Now, maybe, it's time to listen to the political scientists - who say we have to fight to win before we can help the Iraqis create a viable political future for themselves." ”

From Pentagon Wonks, by John Podhoretz (*New York Post*, December 15, 2006) (view)

“ "For the past three years, U.S. commanders have repeatedly tried to reduce American troop levels in Iraq and turn responsibilities over to the Iraqis. Each time, however, reality has intervened and forced U.S. generals to go in the opposite direction: maintaining or increasing force levels." ”

From A case for additional troops, by The Washington Times editorial board (*The Washington Times*, December 15, 2006) (view)

“U.S. forces have repeatedly been able to clear areas of terrorists and insurgents, but haven't been able to hold them, for lack of manpower (witness the failure of the current Baghdad-security plan). We need more troops to do the holding, but the ISG wants to stop the clearing as well.”

From One for the Wastebaskets, by National Review editorial board (*National Review*, December 1, 2006) (view)

Against this position

“Keeping in mind the adage of T. E. Lawrence, aka “Lawrence of Arabia,” that “better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them,” the focus must continue to shift from “direct action” to training the Iraqis.”

From Are We Winning in Iraq?, by Mackubin Thomas Owens (*National Review*, September 19, 2006) (view)

“While consolidating bases is a short-term way to reduce troop requirements, fielding more adviser teams will eventually allow more Americans to come home. American troops embedded with the Iraqis they train usually require less support than conventional units; many rely on the Iraqis for food, shelter and basic defenses. Green Berets in 12-man teams have already replaced entire battalions of conventional forces in some Iraqi cities.”

From The Right Troops in the Right Places, by Seth Moulton (*The New York Times*, September 15, 2006) (view)

“While even a successful Iraqi force would need U.S. support for years to come, the issue is: Who will take the lead in combat? The Iraqis must do this themselves - and their moment of truth can no longer be delayed. It's absurd to brag that Iraq now has 300,000 men in uniform if all most of them do is collect paychecks and duck responsibility - while backing their own ethnic and religious factions.”

From No More Troops, by Ralph Peters (*New York Post*, October 10, 2006) (view)

“One has to ask all these wise people how they know that more troops will prevent Iraqis from killing one another or merely provide more targets for snipers and roadside bombers. ... Does not all the literature on guerrilla war suggest that traditional military force, no matter how large, cannot cope with dedicated shadow warriors?”

From Latest disastrous plan: More GIs to Iraq, by Andrew Greeley (*Chicago Sun-Times*, November 17, 2006) (view)

“This is the strategic logic of American benevolence. As in: “We're so strategically nice it's only logical that everyone like us.” Is it really? Are the same criteria for reasonableness common to every culture? PC aside, of course not.”

From A flawed strategy in Iraq, by Diana West (*The Washington Times*, March 23, 2007) (view)

“ "Can 20,000 more troops help mold a functioning nation out of three disparate groups, two of whom increasingly see themselves as parties to sectarian war, and the third of which -- the Kurds -- already has a mostly autonomous region? The answer is pretty obviously no." ”

From *Stopping the surge*, by Scot Lehigh (*The Boston Globe*, January 9, 2007) (view)

“ "I hope that when President Bush discusses sending more troops to Iraq, knowing that we will have to pull out sooner rather than later, that the conversation comes around to the human suffering. Does anyone at the table ask about the personal anguish, the long-term effects, emotional, psychological and financial, on the families of those killed, wounded or permanently disabled?" ”

From *The Least Immoral Choice*, by Sally Quinn (*The Washington Post*, January 9, 2007) (view)

“ "The idea that going to door to door in Baghdad will make a difference is even more ridiculous. Not only was a Stryker Brigade extended in Baghdad several months to unsuccessfully secure the city, but we have gone door to door in other cities such as Fallujah, only to return later because we couldn't seize and hold terrain." ”

From *All Roads to Iran*, by Jon Soltz (*The Huffington Post*, January 9, 2007) (view)

“ "Washington might do well to ponder the limits of the U.S. responsibility to defend the corrupt and inept government of Prime Minister Nouri Maliki — a government heavily infiltrated by the very militias that the troop surge is supposed to destroy." ”

From *No more Middle East crusades*, by Dimitri K. Simes (*Los Angeles Times*, January 9, 2007) (view)

“ "Congress must exert its constitutional authority and demand a vote before any escalation in Iraq. In October 2002, Members of Congress authorized a war against the regime of Saddam Hussein, not to send our troops into a civil war. I voted against that resolution and feel an escalation of this war only compounds the original mistake of going in the first place." ”

From *Escalation? It's Not His Decision to Make*, by Ted Kennedy (*The Huffington Post*, January 9, 2007) (view)

“ "What the surge would do is put more American troops in harm's way, further undercut the morale of U.S. forces and risk further alienating elements of the Iraqi populace. American casualties would probably rise, at least temporarily, as more troops appeared on the streets -- as happened in the summer when a brigade from Alaska was extended and sent into Baghdad." ”

From *The Smart Surge: Diplomacy*, by Wesley Clark (*The Washington Post*, January 8, 2007) (view)

“ "The principal proponents of the "surge" are William Kristol of The Weekly Standard and Frederick Kagan of the American Enterprise Institute. Now, even if the Joint Chiefs of Staff hadn't given the surge a thumbs down, Mr. Kristol's track record should have been reason enough to ignore his advice." ”

From *Quagmire of the Vanities*, by Paul Krugman (*The New York Times*, January 8, 2007)

(view)

“ "Now Mr. Kagan is advocating helping the Shia eliminate the remaining Sunni neighborhoods west of the Tigris River. When Iraqi forces and militias go into Sunni neighborhoods they will go in to settle sectarian scores, not to hunt "terrorists". The United States government should take no part in this." ”

From Prelude To A Massacre, by Mash (*Daily Kos*, January 7, 2007) (view)

“ "The idea that such a hellhole can be policed back to normality with an extra 20,000 US troops is absurd. Such a force (which means barely 7,000 on patrol at any one time) would simply disappear into the dust. The insurgency is anyway now entangled with the conflict between Shi'ite and Sunni, claiming hundreds of lives each week and fought by paramilitaries mostly armed by America in a shambles of unaudited theft and fraud." ”

From One last push and that's you finished in Iraq, Mr President, by Simon Jenkins (*The Times*, January 7, 2007) (view)

“ "It is well to remember that for every 1,000 U.S. combat troops, only 229 actually use weapons. The rest are support, supply, medical and other subsidiary services. That means that 30,000 more troops will actually put somewhere in the neighborhood of 6,870 fighters into the streets of Baghdad. Hardly enough to squelch the violence." ”

From Execution makes martyr of Hussein, by Marvin Zonis (*Chicago Tribune*, January 3, 2007) (view)

“ "Then we have the troops themselves, only about half of whom, according to a Military Times poll, want additional troops sent to Iraq. This seems to indicate that our troops want to get the heck out of Iraq and never look back, which is understandable." ”

From Human Toll Of War: Out of the mess, by Seattle Post-Intelligencer editorial board (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, January 3, 2007) (view)

“ "The hanging of Saddam Hussein did not change anything, but it did illuminate the deeply sectarian nature of this government. If it were my choice, I would not "surge" American troops in defense of such a government. I would not trust it to deliver on its promises." ”

From A Plausible Plan B, by Charles Krauthammer (*The Washington Post*, January 19, 2007) (view)

“ "The most disastrous part of Bush's plan is his pressure on the Maliki government to let US troops enter Baghdad's 2 million-strong Shia district, Sadr City, with all-out force, in order to smash Moqtada al-Sadr's militias. This could produce a civilian bloodbath of colossal proportions, dwarfing the massacres in Falluja in 2004." ”

From There is no military solution for Iraq, only a political one, by Jonathan Steele (*The Guardian*, January 12, 2007) (view)

“ "If 132,000 U.S. troops cannot pacify 26 million Iraqis in more than three years, how can 153,500 do the job in a few months? If more than \$18 billion in reconstruction aid has failed to fix the situation in Iraq but let it get worse, why would a few more billion finally fix it this year? If the Iraqi government has failed to meet its past markers of progress, why will it succeed in meeting new ones?" ”

From Know when to fold 'em, by William Odom (*New York Daily News*, January 11, 2007) (view)

“ "All of us want stability in the Middle East, and Iraq is an important element in achieving that stability. But the military and their families deserve an achievable mission. It is unacceptable to me that we are sending troops back to Iraq who have not completed their training cycle and that we are extending troops who are battle-weary from the intensive combat in Iraq." ”

From A Surge in American Forces is Unacceptable, by John Murtha (*The Huffington Post*, January 11, 2007) (view)

“ "Both Gen. John Abizaid, the top U.S. commander of the Middle East, and Gen. George Casey, the chief commander in Iraq, have expressed their clear skepticism about a troop increase. Now each is being rotated out, quite conveniently for the White House policy. But their admonitions echo loudly." ”

From A surge too far, by San Francisco Chronicle editorial board (*San Francisco Chronicle*, January 10, 2007) (view)

“ "In addition to denying expert advice and the voice of a nation, escalation sends the wrong message to the Iraqi government about charting its own future course. And it sends the wrong message about our priorities in the war on terror." ”

From Same Product, New Package, by Sherrod Brown (*The Huffington Post*, January 10, 2007) (view)

“ "There are too few additional U.S. troops available for too little time to crush Sunni insurgents; they would flee to Sunni Anbar province and return to Baghdad once we left. Moreover, the situation in Baghdad is no longer a classic insurgency. It has deteriorated into a civil war the Shiite-led government is determined to win. U.S. troops would be caught in the middle." ”

From Getting real in Iraq, by Trudy Rubin (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 31, 2006) (view)

“ "That is one troop for every 233 civilians. Even add 20-40,000 to that equation, and we're talking about only one troop per 140-175 civilians, assuming all those are involved in security operations, which they surely will not be. Not even close to the one-for-five we had in Kosovo. So essentially 40,000 more troops is like spitting in the ocean." ”

From Joe Lieberman Just Doesn't Get It, by Jon Soltz (*The Huffington Post*, December 29, 2006) (view)

“ "For months, those commanders, Gen. Abizaid and Gen. Casey, have been unwavering in their opposition to sending more troops to Iraq, arguing that it would increase Iraqi dependency on Washington, lead to more attacks by al-Qaeda, provide more targets for Sunni insurgents, attract more foreign jihadists to Iraq, increase the impression of an American occupation, and, in the evocative words of a senior military official, "be like throwing kerosene on a fire."" ”

From White House Pushes for Troop Surge, Best Advice of Generals Be Damned, by Arianna Huffington (*The Huffington Post*, December 27, 2006) (view)

“ “You could put 100,000 more troops in tomorrow and you're only going to add to the number of casualties until Iraqis sit down together at a bargaining table and compromise. The barrel of a gun can't answer the question of how you force Iraqi nationalism to trump sectarian loyalty.”

From *When Resolve Turns Reckless*, by John Kerry (*The Washington Post*, December 24, 2006) (view)

“ “For sound reasons, the so-called surge concept for Iraq is opposed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and retired generals. Among the latter is former secretary of state Colin Powell, who pointed out during an appearance Sunday on "Face the Nation" that an increase of US forces in Baghdad this past summer failed to halt an increase in sectarian atrocities”

From *A surge without power in Iraq*, by The Boston Globe editorial board (*The Boston Globe*, December 21, 2006) (view)

“ “Rather than talk about additional troops, it's time to begin redeploying troops out of Iraq immediately and engaging other governments and allies in crafting a diplomatic and political solution to the nightmare. That this administration could still think an escalated military option is a credible path to stability and democracy in Iraq is alarming, and indicative of how far removed from reality this president and his inner circle are.”

From *Harman to President Bush: Send More Troops to Iraq...NOT!*, by Jane Harman (*The Huffington Post*, December 21, 2006) (view)

“ “It's been two weeks since the Iraq Study Group released its plan to change the course and bring our troops home. Since then, the President has been on a fact finding tour of his own administration -- apparently ignoring the facts presented by those in the military who know best. The President needs to put forth a plan as soon as possible, one that reflects the reality on the ground in Iraq and that withdraws our troops from the middle of this deadly civil war.”

From *The Clock is Ticking, Mr. President*, by Harry Reid (*The Huffington Post*, December 20, 2006) (view)

“ “The obvious solution is to draw down our forces in Iraq. To ask for more troops to meet a need in Iraq that America should not meet -- according to the American people in the Nov. 7 elections as well as in the polls -- is the moral equivalent of a bad kid deliberately breaking his electric train then telling his parents he has to have a newer, better one for Christmas.”

From *A 'surge' to save Iraq? Sheer madness*, by Dan Simpson (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, December 20, 2006) (view)

“ “We saw the last election as a repudiation of more involvement in Iraq. We heard instead a clear call to bring U.S. troops home, rather than gambling the lives of more young people on this risky enterprise.”

From *Iraq War: A 'broken' Army?*, by Seattle Post-Intelligencer editorial board (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, December 19, 2006) (view)

“ "Since we would be providing 20,000 new targets for snipers and roadside bombs, how many do we calculate will die? It is unconscionable to think about dispatching more young men and women to Iraq without the realistic expectation that their presence will make a difference in a war that is no longer in our control." ”

From A 'Surge' in Wasted Sacrifice, by Eugene Robinson (*The Washington Post*, December 19, 2006) (view)

“ "As so many others have said before the only possible way that a vast increase of combat forces might ever stabilize the situation is if we were prepared to stay in Iraq at similar troop levels for decades. So unless we're willing to make Iraq our fifty-first state it just won't work and will just needlessly waste more and more and more American lives." ”

From More Troops Is Not an Option, by Trey Ellis (*The Huffington Post*, December 15, 2006) (view)

Mixed on this position

“ "Either we just get out of Iraq in a phased withdrawal over 10 months, and try to stabilize it some other way, or we accept the fact that the only way it will not be a failed state is if we start over and rebuild it from the ground up, which would take 10 years. This would require reinvading Iraq, with at least 150,000 more troops, crushing the Sunni and Shiite militias, controlling borders, and building Iraq's institutions and political culture from scratch." ”

From Ten Months or Ten Years, by Thomas Friedman (*The New York Times*, November 29, 2006) (view)

“ "Why then, when the numerical disparities are so much more favorable to our cause than during the Vietnam War, are we, rather than our vastly outnumbered enemies, lamenting the paucity of troops? That we have not secured the country may be due to the limitations put on our soldiers rather than their number; and to our preference for conventional rather than counter-insurgency fighting." ”

From The Fighting Over the Fighting, by Victor Davis Hanson (*National Review*, November 17, 2006) (view)

“ "The logic of the surge assumes that while U.S. soldiers ensured security, Iraq's Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish factions could be pressured into political accord. Yet given their recent behavior, it's hard to believe that the political leadership of any of Iraq's main factions is ready for compromise -- or will be during the limited window created by the surge." ”

From A 'Surge' in Iraq?, by The Washington Post editorial board (*The Washington Post*, January 7, 2007) (view)

“ "Wayne White - for 26 years with the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, now with the Middle East Institute - calls Baghdad "a Shiite-Sunni Stalingrad." Imagine a third nation's army operating between (and against) both German and Russian forces in Stalingrad. That might be akin to the mission of troops sent in any surge." ”

From *The Perils of a Surge*, by George F. Will (*New York Post*, January 7, 2007) (view)

“ “The odds that the surge can accomplish these tasks are vanishingly small. The tragic truth is that the social context for this military strategy has changed since 2003. But another surge may be realistic. This surge would begin by giving up the dream of national reconciliation and acknowledging that Iraq is in the process of dividing itself” ”

From *Making the Surge Work*, by David Brooks (*The New York Times*, January 7, 2007) (view)

“ “If the time has come for that, if indeed that's the last realistic option left, then let this surge be, in fact, a surge, a slam of a surge, a sledgehammer of a surge, as opposed to jury-rigged, on-the-cheap surgelets here and surgelets there. Half measures will not suffice, nor would they be accepted by a public that's weary of seeing young Americans killed or maimed for no discernible purpose in a land that many deem unredeemable.” ”

From *Get it right, Mr. President*, by New York Daily News editorial board (*New York Daily News*, January 7, 2007) (view)

“ “If there is a mission for a surge of American troops, it will be to help Iraq stand on its own sooner. That may mean doubling or tripling the number of American advisers in Iraqi units. It can't mean doing the job for them.” ”

From *Surging into Iraq ...*, by Chicago Tribune editorial board (*Chicago Tribune*, January 5, 2007) (view)

“ “My great concern, as I have written before, is that it's very possible that renewed American fighting in Baghdad, if successful -- which, as Americans, we must hope it to be -- will not only stabilize the chaotic capital of Iraq, but will also entrench its Shi'ite-led, pro-Hezbollah, anti-Western government. This suggests that victory in Iraq may deliver not a new brother for the anti-terror coalition, but rather a perfect ally for Iran.” ”

From *In limbo on Iraq*, by Diana West (*The Washington Times*, January 26, 2007) (view)

“ “You need to tell Iraqis that by calling for a surge in troops you're giving them one last chance to reconcile, otherwise we're gone by Dec. 1. And you need to tell Americans that you're creating a \$45-a-barrel floor price for imported oil, so investors can safely finance alternatives without worrying that they'll be undercut by OPEC.” ”

From *Make Them Fight All of Us*, by Thomas Friedman (*The New York Times*, January 12, 2007) (view)

“ “We wish we had confidence that his new strategy could succeed and that he had made these proposals before spasms of sectarian butchery dragged Iraq to the edge of the abyss. Now, Mr. Bush's plan depends entirely on the credibility and capability of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's government, which has proved weak and more dedicated to protecting Shiite militancy than defending the rule of law.” ”

From *Bush's Last Stand: Is president's new Iraq strategy too little, too late?*, by The Dallas Morning News editorial board (*The Dallas Morning News*, January 11, 2007) (view)

“ It is unlikely that the additional troops will be enough to make a difference, or that Maliki will honor his latest pledge. But America, and Iraq, will know in a matter of months whether U.S. troops can operate freely and whether Maliki's government is worth defending. It would have been nice to have this answer months ago, and Bush deserves the blame for not demanding it sooner.”

From The last way forward, by Los Angeles Times editorial board (*Los Angeles Times*, January 11, 2007) (view)

“ If the White House wants to increase troop levels, it must answer Powell's questions: What indeed is their mission? What can be accomplished by a brief surge at this late date? And how does the president plan to man and fund the mission?”

From Perilous path of troop surge, by Trudy Rubin (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 20, 2006) (view)

“ We've never been willing to do all it takes to win. Now the clock's running out. Without a comprehensive crackdown, Baghdad (and Iraq) will be lost irrevocably in 2007. If we stayed on for a decade, we'd only be keeping the patient on life-support.”

From Fighting to Win, by Ralph Peters (*New York Post*, December 18, 2006) (view)

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