

April 8, 2008 - Murtha: What the Surge in Fact Proves

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What the Surge in Fact Proves

By Congressman John P. Murtha

General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker are testifying this week that the "surge" has worked. They claim that violent incidents have decreased and that progress towards victory in Iraq has been made.

When you look at the surge in purely military terms, it has reduced violence. Our men and women in uniform have done what they have been asked to do. On the battlefield they have no equal.

But the surge proves that there is no military solution to Iraq. Our military cannot guarantee Iraqi economic progress or government efficacy. Look at the facts - oil production remains below prewar levels, electricity in Baghdad remains below prewar levels, unemployment is as high as 50 percent in certain areas, and the Iraqi Government refuses to take the political steps necessary for national reconciliation.

We must not be fooled by those who say there will be chaos if we leave Iraq. The leaders of the Iraqi factions can choose whether or not there will be chaos in Iraq. Prime Minister Maliki, Moqtada al Sadr, President Talabani, and Vice-President Hashimi — they control the forces. In fact, it is widely understood that Moqtada al Sadr's call to his Mahdi militia for a cease fire has been critical to the reduction of violence.

The more U.S. troops we send to Iraq, the more dependent the Iraqis become on U.S. Forces. The longer our troops are there, the less likely it is that the Iraqi security forces and police will take the lead in securing and stabilizing their own country.

Simply put: Why, after five years, \$535 billion, over 4,000 American lives lost and nearly 30,000 wounded, can't the Iraqi government control their own country?

The answer: Because they won't, as long as we are there. That is what the surge in fact proves.