

Face Off: US troop surge

War in Iraq is a fact, how should we cope?

Give diplomacy a fair shot; save lives

Elizabeth Hitz

The Clackamas Print

Almost 20 years ago, we walked away from Iraq. Sure, and 31 other nations saved little Kuwait — but we failed to properly leash Iraq. We gave them rules, but did not enforce them. We sent inspectors, but never looked off the beaten path.

I agree with the common mantra that the war in Iraq was probably based more on money, and corporations than actual morals or self-defense. But I do not believe that the war was

that would have happened either way.

Saddam was like a five-year-old who liked taunting world powers and flaunting disregard for the rules. It was not enough to say they did not really apply to him — with- out ever really making them.

Whether or not he crossed the line — this time, he would eventually be eventually not to mention the atrocities enforced throughout his regime.

But putting aside why we started the war, or whether we should have even gone to war with Iraq to begin with, we did go to war. And because we did, we have a responsibility to Iraq as the aggressor to help build a stable government.

If we were to withdraw our troops from Iraq completely in the near future, the consequences might be drastic next year. As Sen. John McCain (Ariz.) stated, "If we walk away from Iraq, we'll be back, possibly in the context of a wider war in the world's most volatile region."

The main question at this point seems to be: Are we American troops required in Iraq to keep the peace, or would it simply stunt any progress by a fledgling Iraqi government to train its own police force?

But instead of committees and appointing a general every few months, why can't anyone ask the troops who have

first-hand experience, or send military analysts over to Iraq to get the picture piece of "the big picture"?

It seems to this journalist that the American government has a recent history of acting blindly without taking a moment to step back and breathe.

Maybe if they miss a beat, the war, the nation and the world will fall apart. But more likely is the idea that for all the long POWs our politicians conduct, they either do not have enough information to act properly, or they have no grasp of political and military strategy.

Whatever the case, our politicians and military commanders need to start working together, rather than getting into constant deadlocks that prevent any action by the United States. We are at war, people; it is not a bloody game of bridge.

"Saddam was like a five-year-old who liked taunting world powers ..."

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Liz Travers

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Driving around town, there is always a flag-pole within sight. I can't remember the last time the American flag wasn't at half-staff to show mourning for all the men and women, young and old, who have lost their lives in the war in Iraq.

The fall of Saddam Hussein was a victory for all the nations, but he left a huge power vacuum. Filling that vacuum and bringing

back a sense of normalcy is going to take some time, but at what cost?

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and are opposed to sending more troops into Iraq. Sen. Chuck Hagel said, "To put the American military as the only remedy in the situation is a huge mistake, and this is where, I think, you need robust, sustained, ongoing diplomacy, which we have never really practiced publicly in [Iraq]."

We all know that the Iraqis don't like us very much, therefore making diplomacy more difficult. There is, however, no harm in trying.

So far, the United States spends about \$7 billion a month on the war. It has been projected that it could reach \$570 billion by the end of 2010.

Since the war began in early 2003, the United States has lost 3,099 lives, including 2,500

casualties in combat. The Pentagon has shown concern that they won't be able to sustain the current amount of troops without using rotation

and calling in the National Guard. Even that may not be enough.

The president calls this a war on terror, but Iraqi civilians aren't the only ones suffering. Terror is felt by every mother who watches the news in the evening, praying with all she has that her child's name won't be listed. It's also felt by the children of troops, who don't understand why mommy or daddy isn't coming home again.

This war was started with different intentions, that proved to be false, and now we are paying the consequences. It is a fact that the U.S. needs to finish what they started, but peace can never be bought with blood.

Spokesman Bryan Whitman said the Pentagon estimates that the surge is projected to cost \$5.6 billion. This would allow for about four months of operation. Defense Secretary Robert Gates says \$5.6 billion will not last close to a year:

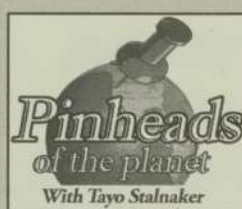
"Those of us involved in the process thought of it in terms of months, rather than 18 months or two years."

The real question is: What is the human cost?

Some politicians are trying a different approach



Photo Illustration by Rachel Gillette Clackamas Print



Jammin 95.5's 'Playhouse' DJs top the list of pinheads

For six years now, the Portland area has been subjected to some of the biggest pinheads in history: the hosts of Jammin 95.5's morning show, *The Playhouse*.

The hosts of *The Playhouse* think they're funny and original. They're not, and anyone who thinks otherwise needs to rethink their life and figure out why they have such bad taste.

Every morning, *The Playhouse* does the same, pointless bits that every other morning show does: lame prank phone calls, trivia call-in games purposely made easy so the hosts can make fun of callers who answer incorrectly, gross stunts involving various bodily fluids and lots of gags involving the less-fortunate members of our society, so the hosts can feel better about their pitiful, worthless lives. Case in point, the "Special Jen" incident.

A few years ago, *The Playhouse* had a mentally-disabled girl (whom they called "Special Jen") participate in a contest called "Adopt-a-Hottie." She was then questioned about her bathroom habits, which eventually led to her pants dropping and everyone mocking her.

P.K., head host and founder of *The Playhouse*, needs to leave the Portland area. He brought his crappy show here from Florida in 2000, and has since been a threat to the Portland way of life.

For example, in July 2006, P.K. allegedly stated, "When I hear on TV that a cyclist has been hit and killed by a car, I laugh; I think it's funny. If you are a cyclist, you should know I exist, that I don't care about you, that I don't care about your life."

P.K. later said, in an interview with *The Portland Mercury*, that that wasn't his actual on-air statement, and that he actually said, "If you're going to act like an idiot on a bike and you're going to run stop signs and pretend you're a car, and we get into a fender bender and something happens to you, I'm not going to care about you."

Be that as it may, only a true pinhead makes asshole comments like that. However, P.K. did later apologize for his comment, and even went on a bicycling tour of Portland with a group of cyclists. However, P.K. is friends with Lars Larson, so he's still a pinhead.

Lastly, I'm disgusted that ASG insists on having Jammin' 95.5 come to most of their campus events. It sickens me that ASG supports the same station that airs *The Playhouse*. ASG, please, get another radio station to sponsor your little shindigs.

The Playhouse pinhead rating: 5/5 (It would've been a four, but they are nationally syndicated.)



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