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## **ALP Will Vote on Iraq – Andren**

The Opposition leader Simon Crean has assured Member for Calare Peter Andren that he'll be calling for a vote on the Government's commitment of troops to war in Iraq.

“Contrary to Labor's position in the debates we had last September and two weeks ago, Mr Crean told me today the Opposition will join me in driving this debate to a vote,” Mr Andren said.

“There is a risk that the Government will again attempt to adjourn the debate before all MPs have spoken, to avoid dividing parliament, as they have denied Members the opportunity to question the Government's decision by cancelling question time today.

“This hiding from scrutiny cannot be allowed to continue. The Government must face its responsibility and account for itself to the Australian public, our service people and their families.

“Mr Howard has attempted to legally justify this so-called pre-emptive war under the UN resolutions from the first Gulf War but my advice strongly contradicts this.

“The intention of the UN resolutions from 12 years ago was only ever intended to apply at that time. Even so, the ceasefire resolution 687 contains only one paragraph that authorises the ongoing use of force and does so only in relation to guaranteeing the Kuwaiti border. Further, this guarantee can only be upheld by the UN Security Council and not by individual states.

“There was no basis for unilateral action in 1991, and there is no basis now.

“I am mindful the ALP's previous position, that they might support unilateral US action in the event of a veto by a permanent member of the UN Security Council, will not now be tested.

“But I am heartened by Mr Crean's speech in Parliament yesterday in which he called this a *reckless and unnecessary act*, recognised that for the first time in our history we are an aggressor in war and called for the troops to be brought home.

“The Opposition leader said we are ignoring the ANZUS treaty, the basis of our alliance with the US, with its stated obligation to seek peaceful solutions to international disputes in accordance with the UN Charter, which does not include pre-emptive attacks.

“I will hold Mr Crean to his words and continue to push the Government to recognise its obligations to the UN and to the peaceful conduct of our international relations, and to call for our troop to be brought home from this illegitimate and immoral war,” Mr Andren said.