



2 July 2007

M
e
d
i
a

R
e
l
e
a
s
e

Howard must call Iraq troops home – Andren

The Prime Minister should abandon his slavish subordination to George Bush's disastrous foreign policy and withdraw our troops from Iraq, according to Independent Member for Calare, Peter Andren.

“With American political leaders on both sides now calling for the withdrawal of US forces, the continued presence of Australia's 1500 troop deployment exposes them to unwarranted danger for no good purpose,” Mr Andren said.

“Respected Atlantic Monthly correspondent Nir Rosen who has spent much of the past four years reporting from all key provinces in Iraq says the inhabitants of the country both Sunni and Shiite want the Americans to go.

“He argues the Shiite majority and Sunni minority would work together after a foreign withdrawal, while the Kurds in the north are preparing for secession whatever the outcome in the south.

“Rosen says the Iraqi Shiites Supreme Council and the Sunni Association of Muslim Scholars have both called for withdrawal of US forces, and the continued presence of foreign troops is exacerbating the civil war rather than helping restore peace.

“Both John Howard and President Bush have a huge credibility and political stake in Iraq, and they must realise by now it has failed both domestically and more importantly in the very country they invaded – without UN sanction – on the basis of deliberately falsified evidence of ‘Weapons of Mass Destruction’.

“Rosen and other expert observers believe the foreign insurgents currently causing so much death and destruction would have no-one to fight should the Americans withdraw. Iraqis overwhelmingly want peace and security, not jihad until death, according to Rosen.

“More and more US Republicans are now calling for a withdrawal, led by senior Republican Richard Lugar who has called for a post-withdrawal diplomatic forum of the US, Iraq and all neighbouring countries,” Mr Andren said.

“Only the stubbornness and pride of the US and Australian leaders is standing in the way of what the rest of the world and most Iraqis now want – the withdrawal of foreign forces.

“Mr Howard must swallow this pride and bring the troops home,” he added.

For further information: 02 6332 6229 or 0419 612 891.