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## "Packing It In"

By Dahr Jamail  
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Surprise, surprise. In an interview with John King from CNN last Thursday, Dick Cheney said that withdrawing US forces from Iraq would be the "worst possible thing we could do."

Doing his best to stoke the always simmering fears of so many US residents (let us be careful how we use the word "citizen"), Cheney said of the terrorist groups in Iraq, "If we pull out, they'll follow us."

Because according to Cheney, "This is a global conflict. We've seen them attack in London and Madrid and Casablanca and Istanbul and Mombasa and East Africa. They've been, on a global basis, involved in this conflict. And it will continue - whether we complete the job or not in Iraq - only it'll get worse. Iraq will become a safe haven for terrorists. They'll use it in order to launch attacks against our friends and allies in that part of the world."

Lovely to watch how people like Cheney, and the minions who support his ilk, conveniently forget that there was no terrorism in Iraq prior to the US invasion/occupation. And one must love his "logic." For according to Cheney, "whether we complete the job or not in Iraq" his beloved "terrorism" will "continue" ... "only it'll get worse."

Then why stay in Iraq, Dick?

Because when Dick said, "only it'll get worse," if he'd been referring to the situation on the ground in Iraq, he'd have been 100% accurate.

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For starters, things for the US military continue to disintegrate. With raping and pillaging being carried out by soldiers who have long since surrendered the war for "hearts and minds," other lesser reported developments underscore the trajectory of the military in Iraq.

According to the Arabic Al-Sharqiyah Television channel, on July 6th: "Gunmen shot down two US Apaches in Al-Zur village, north of Al-Miqdadiyah in Diyala Governorate, northeast of Baghdad. Security sources and local residents said that both gunships were seen crashing in one of the village's farms, and reported that a US APC carrying 15 US soldiers was destroyed in clashes that raged in the cities and villages located north of Al-Miqdadiyah. The US Army is yet to comment on the incident, which comes at a time when US and Iraqi forces are besieging areas north of Al-Miqdadiyah, including Al-Zur village."

This comes at a time when the US military are once again aggressively attacking the forces of Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr - an action which threatens to spread violence deeper into southern Iraq as well as unifying Shia and Sunni against the occupation forces. Think March and April, 2004 - a time when Shia and Sunni were, at times, literally fighting side by side against US soldiers in places like Najaf and Fallujah.

While the military futilely spins its giant wheels in the bloody sands of Iraq, it continues to be the Iraqi people who are suffering the most.

Here is a recent email from an Iraqi friend:

Dear Dahr,

How are you doing? I hope you are fine. I'm sorry for not keeping in touch with you, but as you know the situation is bad here and it gets so much worse and worse that words cannot describe it.

I really want you to remember someone named Abdul Razak who you met one day here. He was responsible for the corpses' freezer at one of the hospitals where you visited. This was the man who helped you as you nearly fainted when you tried to enter the freezer. This man, unfortunately, was found killed and his body thrown away on a street on the 4th of April of this year. I met his wife and his five children. The oldest child is a girl who is 20 years old and the youngest is 6 years old. They live in a rented house. The father's salary was the only source of

money for the whole family. Now, as he is dead, they have no source of money. I tried to help them by getting some donations for them from the staff working in the hospital where he used to work, but it seems that it is not enough. Of course for a big family like his, this makes it more difficult. But I hope we can ease their pain and help them manage their life by finding someone who can donate some money. I am wondering if you can get some donations for this family to start a new life and construct a small project to help them manage their life. Thank you in advance ...

I get these regularly, and several of my colleagues who have also worked in Iraq are telling me that they too are receiving requests for help nowadays.

Here is another email I received the day before the aforementioned, from another friend in Baghdad:

Dear friend,

Maybe this is the last message I am going to send ... really I don't have anyone here. I am like a foreigner in my own country. I am really feeling very afraid. I am living next to Al Sadr City and the Al Sadr militia is killing anyone who is Sunni, especially when any explosion attacks the Shia. They come to our zone and take Sunni people from their houses and kill them. They killed one of my relatives. They killed my neighbor, who was only 26 years old. My friend, the situation now in Baghdad is very bad. Do you know that there is no work and no safety, even in my own house? I'm very sad to tell you that I am very tired from changing my house. My family and I leave the house every month for three weeks and we run away like some one who did a crime. What is our crime?

We are in a very bad situation. It is so bad now. Please help, is all that I ask as we need help now. We are living, just waiting for our turn to die ... Please help us if you can ... I don't have any one to ask but you.

So while Iraqis are being killed or fearing death as they suffer through the daily hell that is the US occupation, Cheney, the real force behind this "administration," tells CNN, "No matter how you carve it - you can call it anything you want - but basically, it is packing it in, going home, persuading and convincing and validating the theory that the

Americans don't have the stomach for this fight."

Guess what, Dick - moral and sane Americans "don't have the stomach for this fight" because this fight should have never taken place. And anyone with a soul, let alone a conscience, should be more than happy to see US troops in Iraq "packing it in."

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*Dahr Jamail is an independent journalist who spent over 8 months reporting from occupied Iraq. He presented evidence of US war crimes in Iraq at the International Commission of Inquiry on Crimes Against Humanity Committed by the Bush Administration in New York City in January 2006. He writes regularly for [TruthOut](#), [Inter Press Service](#), [Asia Times](#) and [TomDispatch](#), and maintains his own web site, [dahrjamailiraq.com](http://dahrjamailiraq.com).*

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