

Washington, D.C. - Yesterday, the House of Representatives passed an amendment to prohibit a permanent U.S. military presence in Iraq. The vote came on the heels of Rep. David Price's sharp questioning of General John Abizaid, the U.S. Army's top commander in the Middle East, about long-term U.S. policy in Iraq.

During General Abizaid's testimony before a House Appropriations Subcommittee, Price asked: "Can you make an unequivocal commitment that the U.S. does not plan to establish permanent bases in Iraq?" Abizaid's response: "No sir, I can't...the policy on long-term presence in Iraq hasn't been formulated."

Price's questions prompted concern among House members and were widely cited during floor debate on the amendment, which was offered during consideration of a \$91.8 billion supplemental appropriations bill.

"On Saturday, our Ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad, said the U.S. has no goal of establishing permanent bases in Iraq," Rep. Price told his colleagues on the floor of the House. "Three days later, General Abizaid tells me the policy on long-term presence in Iraq 'hasn't been formulated.' If Administration officials cannot make up their minds three years into this war, it is time Congress did it for them."

Rep. Price has been outspoken in his opposition to the war and to the President's handling of it. He has cosponsored legislation (H. Con. Res.197) to prohibit a permanent U.S. military presence in Iraq. He has also introduced legislation (H.J. Res.70) to require the President to submit to Congress an exit strategy for U.S. forces in Iraq and to prohibit permanent bases.

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