

The U.S. won't leave Iraq unless Iraqis force it out

By [Kevin Zeese](#)

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The message is clear. Indeed, it's gigantic for all Iraqis, for the entire world to see. A 100 acre compound - ten times the size of the typical U.S. embassy, the size of 80 football fields, six times larger than the UN, the size of Vatican City. The U.S. Embassy Compound, in the middle of Baghdad - the center for U.S. domination of the Middle East and its resources.

The compound towers above the Tigris River like a modern fortress. It will have its own sources of power and water and sit in the heart of Baghdad. If there is any thought that the U.S. is planning on leaving Iraq, the new embassy should make it clear 'We're staying!'

The growing skyline of the U.S. embassy in Baghdad is only the most recent indication that the U.S. has no intention of leaving. President Bush has already told us we're their until the end of his tenure. More important than words, building "permanent" military bases in Iraq reinforces the message of the huge embassy.

The DoD does not like to use the word 'permanent' even for our bases in Germany and Korea. Euphemisms like "enduring bases" or "contingency operating bases" are used. They're less likely than 'permanent' to cause further anti-American unrest in Iraq.

Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt, deputy chief of operations for the coalition in Iraq, told the *Chicago Tribune* in March 2004: "This is a blueprint for how we could operate in the Middle East." Zoltan Grossman, a geographer at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Wash., told the *Christian Science Monitor* that since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the U.S. has established a string of 35 new bases between Poland and Pakistan, not including the Iraqi bases. He maintains that the U.S. is establishing a "sphere of influence" in that region. Joseph Gerson, author of *The Sun Never Sets: Confronting the Network of Foreign U.S. Military Bases*, also says the war and bases aim at maintaining U.S. control over the Middle East with its massive oil resources.

The plan entails construction of long-lasting facilities in Iraq. The bases will include barracks and offices built of concrete blocks, rather than metal trailers and tents. The buildings are designed to withstand direct mortar strikes. Initial funding was provided in the \$82 billion supplemental appropriations bill approved by Congress in May 2005.

Permanent military bases planned for Iraq

The *Christian Science Monitor* reported in April 2006, "the Pentagon would prefer to keep its bases in Iraq. It has already spent \$1 billion or more on them, outfitting some with underground bunkers and other characteristics of long-term bases. Some U.S. bases in Iraq are huge, e.g., Camp Anaconda, north of Baghdad, occupies 15 square miles, boasts two swimming pools, a gym, a miniature-golf course, and a first-run movie theater. The \$67.6

billion emergency bill to cover Iraq and Afghanistan military costs includes \$348 million for further base construction.”

According to *Global Security Watch*, on March 23, 2004 “it was reported that ‘U.S. engineers are focusing on constructing 14 enduring bases,’ long-term encampments for the thousands of American troops expected to serve in Iraq for at least two years. The U.S. plans to operate from former Iraqi bases in Baghdad, Mosul, Taji, Balad, Kirkuk and in areas near Nasiriyah, near Tikrit, near Fallujah and between Irbil and Kirkuk... enhance airfields in Baghdad and Mosul...”

Long lasting military bases in Iraq will be an expensive budget item even if the U.S. decides to reduce its forces to 50,000, less than half the current troop level. The annual cost would run between \$5 billion to \$7 billion a year, estimates Gordon Adams, director of Security Policy Studies at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Recently, the House voted, by a voice vote, to oppose a permanent military presence in Iraq. Future on the record votes for appropriations will show whether this was a symbolic election-year vote, or something the House is serious about.

President George W. Bush claims the U.S. only intends to stay “as long as necessary and not one day more.” And, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has testified on February 17, 2005 in Congress: “I can assure you that we have no intention at the present time of putting permanent bases in Iraq.” These claims are hard to believe when Congress voted for the first funds for long-term bases that May, and construction is now underway.

As Joost Hiltermann, of the International Crisis Group, said: “One of the reasons they invaded, as far as I can tell, is because they needed to shift their military operation from Saudi Arabia and Iraq was probably the easiest one in terms of a big country to support their presence in the Gulf.” Also, the idea that the U.S. wanted to swap Iraq for Saudi Arabia was acknowledged by then-deputy secretary of defense Paul Wolfowitz in an interview with *Vanity Fair* in 2003 saying: “. . . we can now remove almost all of our forces from Saudi Arabia. Their presence there over the last 12 years has been a source of enormous difficulty for a friendly government. It’s been a huge recruiting device for al Qaeda.”

On April 20, 2003, *The New York Times* reported that “the U.S. is planning a long-term military relationship with the emerging government of Iraq, one that would grant the Pentagon access to military bases and project American influence into the heart of the unsettled region.”

On May 2005, the *Washington Post* reported that plans called for consolidating American troops in Iraq into four large air bases: Tallil in the south, Al Asad in the west, Balad in the center and either Irbil or Qayyarah in the north. Each base would support a brigade combat team, along with aviation and other support personnel.

In January 2005, it was reported that the Pentagon was building a permanent military communications system in Iraq. The new Central Iraq Microwave System, is to consist of up to 12 communications towers throughout Iraq, along with fiber-optic cables connecting Camp Victory to other coalition bases in the country. The U.S. also has plans to renovate and enhance airfields in Baghdad and Mosul, and rebuild 70 miles of road on the main route for U.S. troops headed north.

The infrastructure is being put in place for a long-term military presence in Iraq. Unless

Americans get tired of footing the growing and expensive bill for occupying Iraq – now at nearly \$10 Billion per month – or the Iraqis are able to force the United States to leave it, looks like Baghdad will be the center of operations for the U.S. presence in the Middle East. The U.S. will be sitting on top of the Earth’s vast, but shrinking, oil resources.

Maps of U.S. bases can be seen at:

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/iraq-maps.htm>

<http://www.fcni.org/iraq/bases.htm>

Description of the 14 Long-Term Bases in Iraq;

Source: GlobalSecurity.org

As of mid-2005, the U.S. military had 106 forward operating bases in Iraq, including what the Pentagon calls 14 “enduring” bases – all of which are to be consolidated into four mega-bases.

1) Green Zone (Baghdad)

The Green Zone in central Baghdad includes the main palaces of former President Saddam Hussein. The area at one time housed the Coalition Provisional Authority; it still houses the offices of major U.S. consulting companies and the temporary U.S. embassy facilities.

2) Camp Anaconda (Balad Airbase)

Camp Anaconda is a large U.S. logistical base near Balad. The camp is spread over 15 square miles and is being constructed to accommodate 20,000 soldiers.

3) Camp Taji (Taji)

Camp Taji, former Iraqi Republican Guard “military city,” is now a huge U.S. base equipped with a Subway, Burger King and Pizza Hut on the premises.

4) Camp Falcon-Al-Sarq (Baghdad)

In late September 2003, the 439th Engineering Battalion delivered over 100,000 tons of gravel and is assisting with building roads, walls, guard towers, and buildings for Camp Falcon. Camp Falcon is planned to house 5,000 soldiers.

5) Post Freedom (Mosul)

Saddam Hussein’s former palace in Mosul is currently home to the 101st Airborne Division.

6) Camp Victory- Al Nasr (Baghdad Airfield)

Camp Victory is a U.S. Army base situated on airport grounds about 5 kilometers from Baghdad International Airport. The base can house up to 14,000 troops. Al Faw Palace on Camp Victory is surrounded by a man-made lake and serves as an unofficial conference center for the Army.

7) Camp Marez (Mosul Airfield)

Located at an airfield southwest of Mosul, Camp Marez has a tent dining capacity for 500. In December 2004, a human bomber killed himself and 13 U.S. soldiers at the base's dining tent.

8) Camp Renegade (Kirkuk)

Strategically located near the Kirkuk oil fields and the Kirkuk refinery and petrochemical plant, Camp Renegade has a dormitory that houses up to 1,664 airmen in 13 buildings with six to eight people to a room.

9) Camp Speicher (Tikrit)

Named after F/A-18 pilot Michael "Scott" Speicher who was shot down during the first Gulf War in 1991, Camp Speicher is located near Tikrit in northern Iraq, approximately 170 kilometers north of Baghdad.

10) Camp Fallujah (Rail Station?)

The exact whereabouts and name of this base is unknown. Analysts believe that the U.S. is building an "enduring base" in Fallujah, a large town forty miles west of Baghdad.

11) Unknown name (Nasiriyah)

The exact whereabouts and name of this base is unknown. Analysts believe that the U.S. is building an "enduring base" near Nasiriyah, a provincial capital of South-East Iraq on the Euphrates River.

12) Unknown name (between Irbil and Kirkuk)

13) Unknown

14) Unknown

Kevin Zeese is director of Democracy Rising (www.DemocracyRising.US) and a candidate for U.S. Senate (www.ZeeseForSenate.org).

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