

April 15, 2008 - Rep. Slaughter Slams Reckless Use of Tax Dollars on War Without End

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, April
15, 2008

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Use of Tax Dollars on War Without End

Average Income Tax Return Only Covers Cost of One-Half
Second of the War

Washington, DC – Congresswoman
Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Chairwoman of the House Committee on Rules,
today issued the following statement for Tax Day 2008:

“As Americans are finishing up their tax returns today, President Bush and Republican standard bearers should follow their own advice and engage in a little straight talk about what the real cost of the Iraq War means for the American taxpayer,” said Rep. Slaughter. “The hard earned money of America’s working families is being siphoned away from the critical investments needed to reinvigorate our spiraling economy to fund a war in Iraq with no end in sight and no plan for success.”

“With the war now costing \$10.3 billion a month, the income tax paid by a typical taxpayer will cover the cost of only one-half a second of the conflict,” continued Rep. Slaughter. “Such an extraordinary burden comes at the expense of rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, improving education, and expanding health care coverage for children while saddling future generations with unprecedented levels of debt borrowed from foreign countries.”

BACKGROUND ON USE OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS IN IRAQ

**Billions of Taxpayer Dollars
Going to Iraq
War Every Month.** The U.S government is spending \$10.3 billion a month on the Iraq war or about \$4,000 a second, according to the Congressional Research Service. Meanwhile, Iraq oil revenues are projected to total \$40 billion this year and the Iraqi government is running a budget surplus.

**Massive Waste, Fraud and Abuse
in Iraq
Reconstruction Contracts.** Under the Bush Administration, there has been massive waste, fraud and abuse in contracts to well-connected firms, such as the \$42 billion in reconstruction contracts in Iraq. Indeed, according to the Defense Contract Audit Agency, there have been more than \$10 billion in questioned and unsupported costs in these Iraq contracts. A key reason is the overuse of no-bid contracts: under this Administration, spending on no-bid contracts has more than doubled.

**A Key Example of Iraq
Contract Abuses Has Been Halliburton.** Halliburton is an example of the waste, fraud and abuse in Iraq contracts — with Pentagon auditors questioning \$1.4 billion of the billings that Halliburton submitted for its Iraqi work in 2003-2005. Halliburton employees testified that the company charged \$45 for cases of soda, billed \$100 to clean 15-pound bags of laundry, and insisted on housing its staff at five-star hotels in Kuwait. Halliburton officials described the company’s informal motto in Iraq as “Don’t worry about price. It’s cost-plus.”

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