

In Support of an Immediate End to the Occupation of Iraq

Submitted by the King County Labor Council

WHEREAS, the King County Labor Council AFL-CIO supports the men and women in our armed forces even if we do not support President Bush's decision to go to war in Iraq; and

WHEREAS, the Bush administration carried out an invasion of Iraq under the pretense that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction and therefore posed an immediate threat to the security of the United States, and yet no evidence has been found that Iraq had these weapons or the capability to deploy them; and

WHEREAS, the war and military occupation of Iraq have cost the lives of more than 1,500 U.S. and allied troops, the wounding and disabling of thousands more, the deaths by some estimates of over 100,000 Iraqi civilians and the devastation and the entire country; and

WHEREAS, many U.S. military personnel are union members or family of union members who have faced extraordinary danger with courage and made huge sacrifices in this war, and bringing them home now is the best means of protecting them; and

WHEREAS, the Bush administration has used the Iraq war and national security hysteria as a pretext to create a climate of fear at home, to restrict civil liberties and to attack the rights of workers and unions; and

WHEREAS, the war and occupation have cost more than \$200 billion dollars, leading directly to cuts in social and human services, education and even benefits and health care for the veterans of this and other conflicts, while war spending has lined

the pockets of immensely wealthy anti-labor corporations; and

WHEREAS, conditions of poverty, inequality and political repression must be confronted through civil, economic and diplomatic means and will not be solved through the exercise of military might; and

WHEREAS, seven national unions (SEIU, AFSCME, CWA, APWU, GCIU, NPMHU/LIUNA, UE) and numerous state labor federations, central labor councils, local unions and other labor bodies, representing millions of union members, have passed resolutions calling for our troops to be brought home; and

WHEREAS, AFL-CIO President John Sweeney has asked the labor movement at every level to discuss important issues, challenges and problems we confront in preparation for the national convention in July and given that the issues of war and peace and the destruction of the social safety net are among the most important challenges we confront;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the King County Labor Council calls on President Bush to bring our troops home from Iraq immediately and to reject the doctrine and practice of pre-emptive war; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the King County Labor Council calls on President Bush to support the democratic trade unions and the rights of Iraqi workers to democratically form trade unions to improve their economic and social base and recognize that the formation of democratic unions is a critical element in the development of a democratic process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the King County Labor Council calls on President Bush and the Congress to immediately turn over responsibility for security and policing to the Iraqi people in an effort to relieve the American troops of this ongoing responsibility; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the King County labor Council calls on Congress and President Bush to expand benefits for veterans and assist those affected by military base closings, including a G.I. Bill for returning Iraq veterans and a VA housing program that meets current market needs and adequate funding of the VA health care system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the King County Labor Council will assist union members and their families who are called upon to serve in Iraq and returning veterans by identifying and providing information about resources and services available to meet their needs, by advocating for their interests and by protecting their jobs, seniority and benefits and calls upon other unions, labor councils and state labor federations to organize such support at the local level; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the King County Labor Council calls on the National AFL-CIO to

demand an immediate end to the U.S. occupation of Iraq, the return of U.S. troops to their homes and families and the reordering of national priorities toward peace and the human needs of our people; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the King County Labor Council calls on Congress and President Bush to redirect our economic and technological resources, which are being misspent in Iraq, toward economic policies which will improve wages and working conditions and protect labor rights, train workers and young people for good jobs in the changing U.S. economy, rebuild our national infrastructure and develop energy independence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the King County Labor Council calls on Congress and President Bush to restructure our armed forces into a deterrent, rather than offensive force, with peace keeping and civil administration, which will work together with the UN to combat terrorism and protect the security of the American people; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the King County Labor Council shall make this resolution available to its members and to our elected political representatives.