

**“A premature American departure from Iraq would almost certainly produce greater sectarian violence and further deterioration of conditions.... The near-term results would be a significant power vacuum, greater human suffering, regional destabilization, and a threat to the global economy. Al Qaeda would depict our withdrawal as a historic victory. If we leave and Iraq descends into chaos, the long-range consequences could eventually require the United States to return.”**

*– Iraq Study Group, Final Report pp. 37-38*