

★ Signatories

The Honorable George E. Moose

George E. Moose is Adjunct Professor and Professorial Lecturer in International Practice at the Elliott School of International Affairs at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He recently retired from the U.S. Department of State, at the conclusion of a thirty-five year career in the United States Foreign Service.

Ambassador Moose has held a number of senior foreign policy positions. From 1998 to 2001, he was U.S. Permanent Representative to the European Office of the United Nations in Geneva. Previously he served as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (1993 – 1997); Alternate Representative to the United Nations Security Council (1991 – 1992); Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal (1988 – 1991); and Ambassador to the Republic of Benin (1983 – 1986).

Ambassador Moose is the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including the State Department's Distinguished Service Award. In 2002, he was promoted to the rank of Career Ambassador, the most senior rank in the U.S. Foreign Service. He has been appointed to the Consultative Group of International Advisors of the International Committee of the Red Cross. He is also a member of the Aspen Institute's Global Interdependence Initiative, the Board of Directors of Search for Common Ground and the American Academy of Diplomacy.

Ambassador Moose was born in New York City and grew up in Denver, Colorado. He received a B.A. in American Studies from Grinnell College, Iowa, in 1966. He studied American History and Foreign Policy at the Maxwell School at Syracuse University. He was granted an Honorary Doctorate of Laws by Grinnell College in 1990. He speaks fluent French. He is married to Judith Kaufmann, who is also a career member of the Foreign Service.

★ Our Mission

Diplomats and Military Commanders for Change are an unprecedented bipartisan coalition of 27 career chiefs of mission and retired four-star military leaders who have launched a nationwide campaign to press for the need for change in U.S. foreign and defense policy because they are deeply concerned by the damage the Bush Administration has caused to our national and international interests.

DMCC is dedicated to insuring an informed public during a critical election year. On the basis of foreign and defense policy experience spanning half a century, members desire, through their participation in public forums, to share their expertise and express their deep concern over the current state of this country's diplomatic and security challenges. Never in recent years, in the view of the group, have those challenges been as serious as they are today.

★ The Statement

June 16, 2004

Deep concern about the current state of our nation's international relations compels us, 27 men and women who have served the United States in senior diplomatic, national security, and Military positions, to speak out and call for a fundamental change in the United States' approach to foreign policy.

Let me note that we did not seek large numbers of supporters for our statement--we have assembled a varied and representative group of like-minded former senior career officials. Since news of the statement came out, we have been besieged by calls from friends and colleagues around the world who have offered support and encouragement. This is very gratifying.

Before reading the statement, I would add that to be involved in an act that will be seen by many as political if not partisan is for many of us a new experience. As career government officials, we have served loyally both Republican and Democratic administrations. We have not only worked overseas; we have also held positions of major responsibility in the Department of State, Department of Defense, National Security Council, and at the United Nations. For many of us, such an overt step is very hard to do and we have made our decisions after deep reflection.

We believe we have as good an understanding as any of our citizens of basic American interests. Over nearly half a century we have worked energetically in all regions of the world, often in very difficult circumstances, to build piece by piece a structure of respect and influence for the United States that has served our country very well over the last 60 years.

Today we see that structure crumbling under an administration blinded by ideology and a callous indifference to the realities of the world around it. Never before have so many of us felt the need for a major change in the direction of our foreign policy.

We will be among the first to recognize that the nation currently faces unprecedented threats. We recognize too that the Bush administration is now reaching out to allies. But everything we have heard from friends abroad on every continent suggests to us that the lack of confidence in the present administration in Washington is so profound that a whole new team is needed to repair the damage. Repair it we must, we believe, as the future security and well being of the United States depends on it.

The undersigned have held positions of responsibility for the planning and execution of American foreign and defense policy. Collectively, we have served every president since Harry S. Truman. Some of us are Democrats, some are Republicans or Independents, many voted for George W. Bush. But we all believe that current Administration policies have failed in the primary responsibilities of preserving national security and providing world leadership. Serious issues are at stake. We need a change.

From the outset, President George W. Bush adopted an overbearing approach to America's role in the world, relying upon military might and righteousness, insensitive to the concerns of traditional friends and allies, and disdainful of the United Nations. Instead of building upon America's great economic and moral strength to lead other nations in a coordinated campaign to address the causes of terrorism and to stifle its resources, the Administration, motivated more by ideology than by reasoned analysis, struck out on its own. It led the United States into an ill-planned and costly war from which exit is uncertain. It justified the invasion of Iraq by manipulation of uncertain intelligence about weapons of mass destruction, and by a cynical campaign to persuade the public that Saddam Hussein was linked to Al Qaeda and the attacks of September 11. The evidence did not support this argument.

Our security has been weakened. While American airmen and women, marines, soldiers and sailors have performed gallantly, our armed forces were not prepared for military occupation and nation building. Public opinion polls throughout the world report hostility toward us. Muslim youth are turning to anti-American terrorism. Never in the two and a quarter centuries of our history has the United States been so isolated among the nations, so broadly feared and distrusted. No loyal American would question our ultimate right to act alone in our national interest; but responsible leadership would not turn to unilateral military action before diplomacy had been thoroughly explored.

The United States suffers from close identification with autocratic regimes in the Muslim world, and from the perception of unquestioning support for the policies and actions of the present Israeli Government. To enhance credibility with Islamic peoples we must pursue courageous, energetic and balanced efforts to establish peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and policies that encourage responsible democratic reforms.

We face profound challenges in the 21st Century: proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, unequal distribution of wealth and the fruits of globalization, terrorism, environmental degradation, population growth in the developing world, HIV/AIDS, ethnic and religious confrontations. Such problems can not be resolved by military force, nor by the sole remaining superpower alone; they demand patient, coordinated global effort under the leadership of the United States.

The Bush Administration has shown that it does not grasp these circumstances of the new era, and is not able to rise to the responsibilities of world leadership in either style or substance. It is time for a change.

★ The Statement

July 28, 2004

AMERICANS ARE LESS SAFE UNDER BUSH ADMINISTRATION POLICIES WHY AMERICA IS LESS SECURE

President Bush asserts that America is safer as a result of the war in Iraq. But, according to recent Gallup, CBS and NBC polls, Americans increasingly feel less secure because of the war. They are right. While the president declared victory in Afghanistan after the major battles with Al Qaeda, it is clear Al Qaeda is still active, and according to senior Bush Administration officials is currently plotting new attacks against the US from the Afghan-Pakistan border. Al Qaeda has also worked successfully to help new terrorist organizations and activities around the world – Indonesia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Spain – as well as Iraq.

In Afghanistan, the US has been diverted by war in Iraq into a woefully inadequate investment of military, financial and political resources – including the leadership needed to mobilize strong international support. Military and reconstruction assistance levels per capita by the US and its NATO allies are about one tenth of that for Bosnia and Kosovo. As a result, security has declined, opium production is soaring (90% of world total), Taliban has made a comeback, planned parliamentary elections for October have been postponed, and international assistance workers have ceased to operate in many provinces. After two and one half years of trumpeting victory, we are bogged down. Our enemies are encouraged.

In Iraq, we are also bogged down in insurgency and terrorism. The mission has not been accomplished, despite political changes and a belated role for the United Nations. American and Iraqi casualties continue to mount. Security is highly problematic and the political future is murky. The US occupation of an Islamic country is seen by most in the Muslim world as comparable to the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. Muslim fighters flock to Iraq as they once did to Afghanistan. Our friends are discouraged and unwilling to contribute the needed additional resources, even to protect the new UN Representative. Some countries and companies have pulled out, under threat. Our enemies around the world are heartened.

The perception of US military strength is being eroded, as equipment and personnel and budgets are strained to the limit in Iraq. Once again, as in Vietnam, Lebanon and Somalia, highly superior US forces are now seen as vulnerable to guerilla warfare and terrorism. The deterrent value of US military might has been weakened.

Iran and North Korea, the other two members of the “Axis of Evil”, have not been intimidated by threats of unilateral US preemptive action. Nor have they responded to ambivalent United States diplomacy. As a result, North Korea is apparently producing more nuclear weapons and Iran has continued to develop its nuclear capacity. Due to the situation in Iraq, Iran is also assuming an increasingly powerful regional role.

Absent a truly serious visible effort to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or restrain the aggressive Israeli tactics on the ground, the US is increasingly identified in the Arab world as totally supportive of Israeli PM Sharon’s policies. This further exacerbates worldwide Muslim anger at the US over Iraq, undercuts efforts at reform, and increases likelihood of future anti-US terrorism among young people.

In short, progress in the struggle against terrorism has been offset by faulty policy. The overall result is that the Bush Administration’s war in Iraq leaves the United States less secure rather than more.

It is time for a change.