

Withdrawing from Iraq would threaten religious freedom

Before Catholics United decides to mobilize a campaign to pull our troops out of Iraq (CR, July 19), perhaps they should carefully read the accompanying analysis of the Hudson Institute's Center for Religious Freedom concerning the greatest worldwide threat to religious freedom. They may gain new respect for the idea of maintaining a military presence in Iraq.

A majority of Catholics may not like the war in Iraq, but I suspect they would also not like to see Iraq turn into a terrorist stronghold and/or a regime that persecutes Christians. It may have been a mistake to go there in the first place, a debatable issue, but it sure does not make sense to abandon it in the second place.

All that nice talk that would "bring together Iraq's warring factions in a multiparty conference that involves neighboring countries in the peace process" and "provide funding and other support for reconstruction to be done by Iraqis in ways that benefit Iraqis" is already part of the process. Removing our military presence in Iraq would surely strengthen the real threat to religious freedom.