



Woodrow Wilson
International
Center
for Scholars

LEE H. HAMILTON
President and Director

January 8, 2008

Mr. Christian S. Miller
20440 Glen Brae Drive
Saratoga, CA 95070

Dear Mr. Miller:

Thank you for your letter of December 30, 2007 about Iraq. I am pleased to respond to your proposal for "Iraq Oil Revenue Directly to Iraqi Citizens: Bypass Government."

There was considerable interest in the Iraq Study Group in such a proposal, of the kind that the State of Alaska implements with respect to distributing oil revenues to its own residents. We examined this idea carefully.

The Iraq Study Group found merit in it, and stated the following: "These proposals to redistribute a portion of oil revenues directly to the population on a per capita basis... have the potential to give all Iraqi citizens a stake in the nation's chief national resource, but it would take time to develop a fair distribution system."

There is no institution in Iraq at present that could properly implement such a distribution system. It would take substantial time to establish, and would have to be based on a well-developed state census and income tax system, which Iraq currently lacks. In addition, oil revenues have been incorporated into Iraq's state budget projections for the next several years.

This idea is a worthwhile one, with benefits as you state them in your letter. Implementing it requires a competent and effective state administrative system, which Iraq is in the process of developing with U.S. assistance.

I want to thank your daughter for her outstanding service to our country. My thoughts and prayers are with you for her safe return.

With best regards,

Lee H. Hamilton