

# International Security Studies

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

Dear Mr. Miller,

Please forgive me for the delay in answering your letter of 14 December 2007. It just reached me yesterday after being forwarded from Stanford to me here at Yale. Both universities closed their internal mail services over the holidays.

First let me express my admiration and total support for your daughter's exceptional service to our country in Iraq. All Americans should take pride in her commitment there.

Your proposal for distributing Iraq's oil revenues directly to Iraqi citizens is impressive and well thought-out. Ideas such as this seem essential if an oil-producing nation is to avoid the corruption and distorted power relationships of those examples you cite.

The oil revenue situation in Iraq as I have understood it from meetings with various people close to the scene, is far from the comprehensive and careful system you describe, but it may at least be on the right track. While the Iraqi parliament has been unable to pass an overall oil revenue-sharing law, oil revenues in fact have been distributed to the various regions in an informal way which at least holds the potential for evolving into a fair system with some safeguards against governmental wrongdoing. In other words, the government at present being unable to legislate on the matter, a kind of bottom-up and pragmatic approach may be underway.

With the manifest accomplishments of the "surge" strategy over the past 8-10 months, American forces are now being drawn down in Iraq at a fairly rapid pace, although I expect that some form of American military presence in the country will remain, at the request of the Iraqi government, for some years to come.

With best regards,



Charles Hill  
Distinguished Fellow  
International Security Studies