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GAO Concerned Pentagon Too Reliant on Expensive Private Contractors

Calls for Investigation into Poor Performance and Lack of Fiscal Accountability are Mounting as U.S. moves into 6th year of Operations in Iraq.

(Washington, DC) **Amid rising concerns of recession and stagflation the Government Accountability Office released a report yesterday expressing concerns about the increasing reliance by the Pentagon on private contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan.** Among their main concerns were accountability & oversight of military contracts as well as the rising cost of maintaining those contracts.

Kellogg Brown & Root, with a multi-billion dollar contract to the Army, has recently come under public scrutiny for using untreated wastewater to supply U.S. troops in what Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-ND) called a "dangerously poor performance."

Concerns about water sanitation for troops serving in Iraq have festered since 2004 and, despite promises of an Army probe into private contractors last August; KBR's contract has remained unchanged.

An estimated \$3 billion in U.S. taxes have been used to pay private multinational corporations working with little oversight in Iraq. This cost is a substantial portion of the \$275 million spent per day for the occupation in Iraq. Overall, the current military spending accounts for 36% of the Federal Deficit.

To mark the fifth anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq United for Peace and Justice is organizing an unprecedented day of coordinated non-violent civil disobedience and protest; citizens from all over the country will speak out against wasteful government spending in Iraq. **Converging on March 19th in Washington D.C., and in cities across the nation, our message against the occupation will expand to include the full cost of war and the pillars that sustain it.** (Visit: www.5yearstoomany.org)

Peace Action & the Student Peace Action Network will join the call by specifically examining the role of multi-national corporations such as KBR, Blackwater and Exxon in perpetuating this costly occupation. **Peace Action activists will converge on the offices of war profiteers and take direct action to disrupt business as usual using nonviolent civil resistance, protest, roaming street theatre and satire to send a clear message to the corporations that perpetuate and profit from this illegal and immoral war.**

If you would like more information on Peace Action's plan please contact Barbra Bearden, Communication Associate at Peace Action's national office. Barbra can help provide interviews with activists and exclusives on this specific act of civil disobedience while it's happening.

Peace Action & Peace Action Education Fund, with 180,000 supporters and over 100 chapters in 34 states, works to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons and promote government spending priorities that support human needs.