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Thank You!!

Democratic Presidential Candidate

Senator Joe Biden

For providing your straight-forward & truthful answers to our questions:

- Q:** You've proposed an Iraq solution of dividing the country in 3 distinct federalized regions. Have you consulted with the Iraqis about any of this? What do a majority of them want?
- A:** First, the plan I proposed – and that 75 Senators, including 26 Republicans endorsed – is not partition, or rigidly dividing up the country. To the contrary, it would hold Iraq together by bringing to life the federal system enshrined in its constitution. A federal Iraq is a united Iraq, but one in which power, responsibility and resources devolve to regional and local governments, with a limited central government responsible for common concerns like protecting Iraq's borders and distributing its oil revenues... *for Senator Joe Biden's complete answer, please visit www.NHasks.org*
- Q:** The genocide in Darfur is horrific. But should America be the world's policeman? The world is filled with wars, tyranny, disease, and poverty. Why help one and not the other? Maybe we should start with New Orleans and fixing our crumbling infrastructure here at home first before wading into more foreign adventures?
- A:** Helping stop a genocide in Darfur and rebuilding New Orleans are not mutually exclusive propositions. We have the resources and, I believe, the responsibility, to do both. I don't want the United States to be the world's policeman, but I do want us to take the lead in pushing the world to better police itself. I believe strongly that the United States should be leading the international community to a new understanding of state responsibility: when countries without democratic checks systematically abuse the rights of their own people, or when they harbor terrorists and seek weapons of mass destruction, they forfeit their sovereignty. The international community has a right to care what happens within their borders because we know from hard experience it will end up affecting what happens within our borders – and because, after all the horrors of the 20th century, we have some obligation to avoid a repeat in the 21st. If we get other countries to sign on to this concept, they will put up most of the forces and the resources to police problems. We do not have to do this alone or even bear most of the burden... *for Senator Joe Biden's complete answer, please visit www.NHasks.org*
- Q:** We haven't heard much from the other candidates on education. It does not seem to be an important issue in this campaign. But you've made it a centerpiece of yours. At this point in our nation's history, with terrorism, immigration, health care, and Iraq on the front burner, why try to focus on such a mundane issue as education right now?
- A:** Education is not a mundane issue – it is critical to our national security and economic security. That's why I have made education a top priority of my campaign... *for Senator Joe Biden's complete answer, please visit www.NHasks.org*
- Q:** The Congress, led by VP Cheney and Senator Rockefeller, is set to grant retroactive immunity from prosecution for the major telecom companies who repeatedly violated the 4th Amendment of the Bill of Rights and other civil liberties laws in exchange for a payoff of fat government contracts. This new FISA law will also have the effect of protecting the Bush Administration from the risk of disclosure in the Courts of any of their other possible related acts of law-breaking and corruption. Where do you stand on this issue?
- A:** We solved this problem back in 1978 when I and a number of my Senate colleagues drafted the original Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. The law was crystal clear on two fronts: first, that wiretapping not expressly authorized by law was illegal; second, that the government must obtain a warrant from a court before it spied on Americans. The law struck the right balance, protecting both national security and civil liberties. When an Administration willfully violates a law like FISA, as this Administration has, they should be held to account. If a court determines that telecommunications companies also violated the law, they too should be held to account.
- Q:** The Congress has the sole power to raise armies and declare war. So is the hiring of mercenaries and/or subcontractor soldiers by the Executive branch either Constitutional or lawful, in your opinion?
- A:** The Constitution grants Congress the power to "raise and support Armies," "provide and maintain a Navy," and make "[r]ules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces." Article I, § 8, Cls. 12-14. Acting under that authority Congress has enacted many of the laws that govern our military. And of course, Congress, not the President, has the power to initiate war. But the Constitution does not prohibit the Executive Branch from hiring civilian contractors to accompany the military in an armed conflict. We have a long history of using civilian contractors in war, including during World War II. Congress can and should exercise its legislative authority to ensure that the use of contractors by the federal government is proper. In hearings, letters and meetings, starting last winter, I've repeatedly raised questions about security contractors hired by the Department of State in Iraq, including Blackwater. I wrote to Secretary Rice on October 30, telling her that the use of such contractors raises serious Congressional oversight issues, and asking a series of detailed questions about their accountability and the State Department's reliance on them. I'm looking forward to her answers now that the Departments of State and Defense have worked out new rules for using security contractors. The Foreign Relations Committee that I chair will give them a very hard look.
- Q:** The Fourth Amendment contained in the Bill of Rights of the US Constitution states: The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized. As President, do you pledge to uphold this provision 100% and without exception?
- A:** Yes.

For more information, or to contribute questions, ideas, comments, financial or other support, visit:



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- 1) Citizens may submit suggested questions to: suggest@nhasks.org
- 2) Citizens are encouraged to rate the STR (*Straightforwardness, Truthfulness & Responsiveness*) of candidates answers by visiting: www.nhasks.org/STR
- 3) Candidates may answer via public statement, press release or from preauthorized email addresses submitted to answers@nhasks.org. Answers will be posted on www.nhasks.org intact and without editing immediately following secure authentication.