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Seven Years In, Iraq's Future as Uncertain as Ever

Posted By [Jason Ditz](#)

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Another year of war in Iraq has come and gone, and with devastating violence still virtually a daily reality in the nation, the [seventh anniversary of the US invasion looks to come and go with considerably less discussion than in years past.](#)



The repeated escalations of the war in Afghanistan have turned Iraq into a comparatively forgotten war. This, coupled with President Obama's repeated pledges to end the war have led many Americans to conclude that the conflict is, if not entirely so, virtually over.

Yet nearly 100,000 American troops remain on the ground in Iraq, increasingly held hostage by what looks to be a virtual deadlock in this month's parliamentary election. [US officials still insist further cuts are "on the horizon,"](#) but the Obama Administration's pledge to have all combat troops out by August, which was itself a considerable retreat from his campaign pledges to end the war entirely in 16 months, [looks like it will not come to pass.](#)

[There is open talk about a "plan B" in Iraq,](#) which is to slow or even entirely stop the withdrawal of troops from the nation. Officials had said last year that the bulk of America's combat force would not leave until after the election was resolved, but this is now expected to take several months.

In a way, the situation has become even less certain than it was a year ago. At this time last year officials were presenting the then-upcoming parliamentary election as a stabilizing event. With that election dividing the nation's polity more than ever, there seems to be no hypothetical future event for the administration to hang its hopes on.