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Attachments:



MILITARY FAMILIES UNITED



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contacts:

The American Legion - Craig Roberts, 202-406-0887 croberts@legion.org <<mailto:croberts@legion.org>>

Veterans for Freedom - Judy Mayka, 202-998-4070 judy@vetsforfreedom.org <<mailto:judy@vetsforfreedom.org>>

Military Families United - Tom Basile, 917-579-2216 media@militaryfamiliesunited.org <<mailto:media@militaryfamiliesunited.org>>

Foundation for Defense of Democracies - Fred Piccolo, 202-560-0933 fred@defenddemocracy.org <<mailto:fred@defenddemocracy.org>>

Military Families, Iraq & Afghanistan Vets, The American Legion and National Security Leaders Want Answers

Military moms & dads, veterans, security leaders, and American taxpayers deserve honest answers to the toughest national security questions

Washington, DC - The recent bombings in Yemen and Pakistan are a disturbing reminder of the challenges we continue to face fighting extremists in the Global War on Terror. On Friday, the leading voices in the debate on national security dispatched joint letters to the campaigns of Senator Obama and Senator McCain seeking answers to 10 fundamental questions of American security that the next Commander-in-Chief should answer. In addition, a letter was sent to the moderator of tonight's debate, Tom Brokaw, and the questions were submitted online as part of the town hall format.

The organizations involved represent over 3.5 million Americans of all political parties whose chief concern is the importance of winning the War on Terror. It is hoped that these questions are given thoughtful consideration by both nominees as the answers to them are essential to the future of global security.

The American Legion, Vets for Freedom, Military Families United and Foundation for Defense of Democracies have called on moderator Tom Brokaw to ask these tough questions to each candidate at tonight's debate. In addition, these organizations are asking both Presidential campaigns to submit answers in writing.

The following is the text of the letter sent to each campaign and moderator, Tom Brokaw:

BEGIN

Friday, October 3, 2008

Dear Senator,

The American Legion, Vets for Freedom, Military Families United and Foundation for Defense of Democracies would like to congratulate you on winning your party's nomination for President of the United States.

This Tuesday, you will participate in the second Presidential debate of the general election where the candidates will answer questions from real Americans in a town hall format. This letter contains 10 questions on national security and foreign policy - questions that should be answered by any candidate seeking the highest office in our land. Our organizations ask that you address and answer these questions in Tuesday's debate and in a written response.

Many challenges lie ahead of the next Commander-in-Chief: wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, global radical Islamic terrorism, a destabilizing Pakistan, an aggressive Iranian regime intent on building nuclear weapons, a strained U.S. military and energy dependence on Middle Eastern oil.

Truly, there has never been a greater need for strong American leadership.

Our combined organizations represent over 3.5 million constituents, which is America's largest collection of veterans, gold and blue star families and national security experts. We have joined forces because we recognize the stakes have never been higher - the costs never greater. Our next President must understand the grave challenges we face and be prepared to lead and defend our homeland.

Again, congratulations on your victory and we look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

Dave Rehbein
National Commander, The American Legion

Pete Hegseth
Chairman, Vets for Freedom

Brian Wise
Executive Director, Military Families United

Cliff May
President, Foundation for Defense of Democracies

10 Questions:

- 1) Under your administration, what would an American-Iraqi partnership look like? What is your vision for the future of Iraq? Can we win? Are we winning? Must we win?
- 2) Dexter Filkins of the *New York Times* recently reported on the overwhelming reduction in violence and local reconciliation among Sunnis and Shias in Baghdad. Do you agree that the "Surge" achieved its stated goals - militarily and politically - and is the reason for stabilization in Iraq? And, knowing what you know now, would you again support or oppose General Petraeus' counterinsurgency strategy?
- 3) General Petraeus recently reiterated his belief that Iraq is still a "central front" for our enemies, and therefore our country. Do you believe Iraq is, has been, or ever could be "a" or "the" central front against radical Islamists?
- 4) Under your administration, will you consider winning in Afghanistan a necessity and will you propose more troops and/or a new strategy?
- 5) With a new civilian government in place, unilateral American action against suspected al-Qaeda and Taliban targets has been condemned as a right of sovereignty by Pakistan. Do you support certain military action in Pakistan, despite the government's warnings of retaliation, if there is credible intelligence of high value terrorist targets?
- 6) Do you believe that we are engaged in a global war on terrorism? And do you believe that radical Islam is our generation's transcendent challenge?
- 7) The American military is strained from fighting two wars; under your administration, what would you do to strengthen our fighting force? And what impact would victory or defeat on the battlefield have on our force?
- 8) Are you committed to a nuclear-free Iran? If so, what steps would your administration be willing to take to ensure Iran does not get a nuclear weapon?
- 9) Should America invest in a comprehensive missile defense system? Or is it safe to assume that our contemporary enemies can be deterred, as were the Soviets, by the prospect of "mutually assured destruction"?
- 10) America is sending over \$700 billion overseas to buy foreign oil from countries like Saudi Arabia, Iran and Venezuela. Many of our petro-dollars make their way into the hands of terrorist organizations - we are funding both sides in the war on terror through our dependence on Middle Eastern oil. What steps will your administration take to make sure America starts on the path towards energy independence?

END

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