

# **NCC letter to Bush criticizes Iraq policy: President should consider moderate religious perspectives**

News in the [July 26, 2005](#) issue

The National Council of Churches sent a Fourth of July declaration to President Bush to voice grievances over what the organization calls a failed policy in Iraq and a “dishonorable” war.

The letter lists a series of objections, including the escalating price of the war as well as the nondisclosure of Iraqi casualties. The letter asks for a definitive plan for U.S. troop withdrawal.

Bush “hasn’t made it clear what he intends to accomplish in Iraq,” said Larry Pickens, general secretary of the United Methodist General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. “I don’t get that there is a great deal of vision.”

The statement from the NCC governing board termed “the rationale for invasion . . . at best a tragic mistake, at worst a clever deception.”

In an audio news conference June 30, NCC leaders said they are asking the president to consider more moderate religious perspectives in the administration’s policies, which they feel have been overshadowed by the views of conservative Christian supporters.

“It’s clear that the administration has listened more closely to far-right religious leaders who agree with them,” said Bob Edgar, general secretary of the NCC.