



# UUSC JUSTICE SUNDAY

## SIMPLE STEPS FOR JUSTICE

### The situation: Trading justice for war

In 2008, the year of the 40th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination, let us honor his legacy by restoring justice for the people of the United States and the people of Iraq.

#### In the Gulf Coast

More than two years ago, the terrible power of nature, combined with a failure of government, brought about a massive humanitarian crisis. The recovery process remains horribly inadequate and severely skewed along lines of race and class.

**Affordable housing** is nonexistent with rents up as much as 200 percent and thousands of habitable public housing units remaining closed or slated for destruction. **Health care** continues to be sorely lacking with only one of seven general hospitals in New Orleans operating at pre-storm levels, according to a detailed analysis by the Institute for Southern Studies. Immediately following Katrina, New Orleans **public schools** fired 4,000 experienced teachers. In January 2007, 300 students were placed on waiting lists because schools simply had no room for them. While severe mental health issues are on the rise and post-traumatic stress disorder continues to worsen, funding for mental health services has been cut.

**All this is happening in the wealthiest nation in the world. Meanwhile our tax dollars have been diverted to pay for a misguided war rather than to fund programs of social uplift. We must change this course.**

#### Nationwide

As these materials went to press, the war in Iraq had cost more than **\$463,000,000,000**. For the same amount of money any of the following could have been provided throughout the nation:

- ◆ 4,171,107 affordable housing units
- ◆ 8,028,134 elementary school teachers
- ◆ 61,357,297 Head Start places for children
- ◆ health care for 277,393,900 children

Taxpayers in **Louisiana** will pay **\$1.2 billion** for proposed Iraq war spending for FY 2008. According to the National Priorities Project, for the same amount of money, any of the following could have been provided:

- ◆ 14,220 affordable housing units
- ◆ 24,974 elementary school teachers
- ◆ 178,783 Head Start places for children
- ◆ health care for 783,949 children
- ◆ 36,443 public safety officers

Taxpayers in **Mississippi** will pay **\$604.9 million** for proposed Iraq war spending for FY 2008. For the same amount of money, any of the following could have been provided:

- ◆ 8,907 affordable housing units
- ◆ 13,345 elementary school teachers
- ◆ 99,990 Head Start places for children
- ◆ health care for 343,547 children
- ◆ 19,631 public safety officers

[www.uusc.org/justicesunday](http://www.uusc.org/justicesunday)

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# What you can do

These are just a few of the actions you can take. Visit [www.uusc.org/justicesunday](http://www.uusc.org/justicesunday) to find more.

## Educate

Visit [www.uusc.org/justicesunday](http://www.uusc.org/justicesunday) to find resources to educate yourself and your community with the facts about the Gulf Coast, Iraq war, and our nation's continuing practice of spending more on our military programs than on programs of social uplift.

Visit [www.nationalpriorities.org](http://www.nationalpriorities.org) to learn what the war in Iraq is costing the Gulf Coast, or your own community, right now.

Keep these issues at the forefront of your local media. Visit [www.uusc.org/justicesunday](http://www.uusc.org/justicesunday) for guidance in writing letters to the editor.

Hold a candlelight vigil to honor those surviving and those who have become victims of the humanitarian crises in the Gulf Coast and Iraq. This is a great opportunity for engaging children and youth. Visit [www.uusc.org/justicesunday](http://www.uusc.org/justicesunday) for Iraqi and Katrina kids' stories to read during your vigil.

## Act

Support UUSC's human rights work for peace in Iraq, for a just rebuilding of the Gulf Coast, and more. Visit [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org) today.

### ▶ Become a Human Rights Defender

Join our network of activists who receive regular e-mail alerts about opportunities to advocate for justice on specific issues related to UUSC's major program and advocacy initiatives. Take active part in the advocacy initiative for justice in the Gulf Coast and join us in taking action for peace in Iraq.

### ▶ Volunteer in the Gulf Coast

Visit [www.uusc.org/gulfcoastvolunteerprogram](http://www.uusc.org/gulfcoastvolunteerprogram) or contact Peggy Powell at 617-868-6600. Groups can take an active part in Gulf Coast recovery work by participating in the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Volunteer Program. While doing hands-on work, volunteers will learn about the communities affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, particularly the inequalities that continue to affect the rebuilding of Louisiana and Mississippi.

## Speak out

Talk to the candidates. Ask them questions about our nation's priorities in the Gulf Coast and Iraq. Take active part in our nation's democracy as an informed participant. See below and online at [www.uusc.org/justicesunday](http://www.uusc.org/justicesunday) for examples and resources.

### ▶ On Iraq

- ◆ *Do you favor or oppose reductions in spending for defense?*
- ◆ *Do you favor or oppose withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq and if you favor it, when should it happen?*
- ◆ *Do you favor or oppose the United States' giving financial aid to the 4 million Iraqis displaced by the Iraq war?*
- ◆ *What percentage of money being spent on Iraq should we spend on the Gulf Coast?*

### ▶ On the Gulf Coast

- ◆ *What is your assessment of the inequities that have affected the Gulf Coast rebuilding process? How do you propose we address them?*
- ◆ *What is your plan to rebuild the Gulf Coast? What would you do differently from what is currently being done?*
- ◆ *Do you support the right of return for all Gulf Coast residents, including people who rented homes or lived in public housing? If so, how will you protect their right of return?*
- ◆ *What do you see as the obstacles that account for the slow recovery of the Gulf Coast?*