

# WE'VE HEARD THIS ONE BEFORE...

## *Tonight's Presidential Speech Another Attempt to Gain Support for an Indefinite Commitment in Iraq*

*"Mr. Bush has repeatedly asked Americans to give him another chance in Iraq, and Thursday night will be no different." – NY Times, 9/13/07*

President Bush's address to the nation tonight will be **the same thing Americans have heard for more than four years: there are signs of progress in Iraq, we're holding the Iraqi government accountable, and the war in Iraq is a response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks.** In fact, recent reports by the independent Government Accountability Office, the Independent Commission on the Security Forces of Iraq and the National Intelligence Estimate all conclude that the situation on the ground in Iraq is tenuous, Iraqi political reconciliation virtually non-existent, and the main enemy is ethno-sectarian violence – not al-Qaeda.

The "news" will be the withdrawal of some troops, but the President will neglect to say that **his plan will leave America in July 2008 where we were in January 2007.** He will also fail to mention that **this withdrawal is not a change in direction or a sign of success in Iraq – it is merely bowing to the reality** that there are not troops available to maintain the "surge."

A few Bush standards from previous speeches that we're likely to hear tonight:

### **PROGRESS AND TURNING POINTS...THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN**

*President Bush has repeatedly predicted progress and "turning points" in Iraq. In reality, the situation has only deteriorated:*

*"The progress we've made has been hard-fought, and it's been incremental... Yet we have now reached a turning point in the struggle between freedom and terror." – 5/22/06*

*"There's still a lot of difficult work to be done in Iraq, but thanks to the courage of the Iraqi people, the year 2005 will be recorded as a turning point in the history of Iraq, the history of the Middle East and the history of freedom." – 12/12/05*

*"Tomorrow the world will witness a turning point in the history of Iraq, a milestone in the advance of freedom and a crucial advance in the war on terror." – 1/29/05*

### **PLEDGING TO HOLD IRAQIS ACCOUNTABLE...AND THEN NOT**

*In January, President Bush put forward a series of benchmarks that would serve to hold the Iraqi government accountable. With the Iraqis failing to meet these benchmarks, the President is expected to simply create a new measure for success, rather than truly push the Iraqis to make progress:*

*"So America will hold the Iraqi government to the benchmarks it has announced." – 1/10/07*

*"There's a lot more work to be done, and Iraq's leaders must continue to work to meet the benchmarks that have set forward." [sic] – 3/19/07*

### **IRAQ IS KEY TO OUR NATION'S SECURITY...OR MAYBE IT ISN'T**

*The President has repeatedly claimed the war in Iraq is central to the war against terrorists, often linking the war to the 9/11 attacks. However, experts agree Saddam Hussein had no involvement in the 9/11 attacks, and General Petraeus admitted this week that the primary problem in Iraq is ethno-sectarian violence and that he is not certain the war in Iraq is making America safer:*

*"Those who justify withdrawing our troops from Iraq by denying the threat of Al Qaeda in Iraq and its ties to Osama bin Laden ignore the clear consequences of such a retreat. If we were to follow their advice, it would be dangerous for the world and disastrous for America." – 7/24/07*

*"On September the 11th, 2001, we saw what a refuge for extremists on the other side of the world could bring to the streets of our own cities. For the safety of our people, America must succeed in Iraq." – 1/10/07*

*Prepared by the Office of Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, 9/13/07*