

THE WAR IN IRAQ: LOSING CONTROL AND CREDIBILITY



President Bush insists that we're making progress in Iraq, and that we will succeed if we stay the course. However, an increasing chorus of skeptics – including prominent, respected members of the Republican Party and military leaders – is expressing its grave concern about the deteriorating security situation in Iraq, the President's refusal to adjust his failing strategy there, and the prospects for a stable, friendly Iraq. It is abundantly clear that only with new leadership and a new plan will America succeed.

- ⇒ **"We're in a lot of trouble... We've gotta be honest with ourselves, as I said yesterday, the worst thing we can do is hold ourselves hostage to some grand illusion that we're winning. Right now we're not winning... It isn't good enough to just say, well we just have to stay the course. Well, stay the course, what does stay the course mean?"** – Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-NE) [News Conference, 9/17/04]
- ⇒ **"We made serious mistakes right after the initial successes by not having enough troops on the ground, by allowing the looting, by not securing the borders... [Bush has been] perhaps not as straight as maybe we'd like to see... It's very serious. The situation is deteriorating."** – Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) [Fox News, 09/19/04]
- ⇒ **"The administration has been stubborn about troops... We do not need to paint a rosy scenario for the American people. I think the security situation in Iraq is going to get worse before it gets better."** – Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) [CNN Late Edition, 09/19/04]
- ⇒ **"This is the incompetence in the administration."** – Sen. Richard Lugar (R-IN), referring to the fact that only \$1 billion of \$18.4 billion appropriated by Congress for rebuilding Iraq has been spent [ABC "This Week" 09/19/04]
- ⇒ **"Bush hasn't found the WMD. Al-Qaeda? It's worse- he's lost on that front. That he's going to achieve a democracy there? That goal is lost, too. It's lost. Right now, the course we're on, we're achieving [Osama] bin Laden's ends."** – Retired Gen. William Odom, former head of the National Security Agency [Salon, 09/16/04]
- ⇒ **"The idea that this is going to go the way these guys planned is ludicrous. There are no good options. We're conducting a campaign as though it were being conducted in Iowa, no sense of the realities on the ground. It's so unrealistic for anyone who knows that part of the world. The priorities are just all wrong."** – Retired Gen. Joseph Hoare, former Marine commandant and head of the U.S. Central Command [Salon, 09/16/04]
- ⇒ **"I see no ray of light on the horizon at all. The worst case has become true...I see no exit. We've been down that road before. It's called Vietnamization."** – Jeffrey Record, professor of strategy at the Air War College [Salon, 09/16/04]

- ⇒ **"I don't think that you can kill the insurgency. We see larger and more coordinated military attacks. They are getting better and they can self-regenerate. The idea there are X number of insurgents and when they're all dead we can get out is wrong. The insurgency has shown an ability to regenerate itself because there are people willing to fill the ranks of those who are killed. The political culture is more hostile to the U.S. presence. The longer we stay, the more they are confirmed in that view."** – W. Andrew Terrill, professor, Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute [Salon, 09/16/04]

- ⇒ **"A classified National Intelligence Estimate prepared for President Bush in late July spells out a dark assessment of prospects for Iraq, government officials said Wednesday. The estimate outlines three possibilities for Iraq through the end of 2005, with the worst case being developments that could lead to civil war, the officials said."** – [New York Times story, 09/16/04]

- ⇒ **"There has been poor strategic thinking in this. There has been poor operational planning and execution on the ground. And to think that we are going to 'stay the course,' the course is headed over Niagara Falls. I think it's time to change course a little bit, or at least hold somebody responsible for putting you on this course. Because it's been a failure."** – Ret. Gen. Anthony Zinni, former commander-in-chief, United States Central Command Middle East [CBS News, 05/14/04]