

The Speech Bush Needs to Give...and Soon!

My fellow Americans, I address you tonight as the President of a country at a crossroad. We are facing a choice of how best to continue the fight against Radical Islamicists and the tactics of terror they use to achieve their goals. Make no mistake as to what those goals are. They are not our withdrawal from Afghanistan, Iraq or the rest of the Arabian Peninsula. They are not the establishment of a Palestinian State or ending our support for Israel. If we did all of those things tomorrow, the threat would not end. The threat will end in one of two ways. Either hundreds of millions of people, Muslims, Christians, Jews and others will be forced to live in an Islamic theocracy under Sharia Law or the Radical Islamicists will realize that we, the United States, our Allies, in fact, free people across the world WILL not and thus CANNOT be defeated. Whatever course we choose, the road to victory will not be a short one. It will not be easy and it will not be a road without terrible losses and without errors. In the six years of my presidency and in the decades preceding it, we have suffered both.

Our war against Radical Islamicists neither began nor ended on September 11th, 2001. We were attacked before and have been since, from the embassy hostage crisis in Tehran, to Mogadishu, to the Khobar Towers and the first attack on the World Trade Center. Our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were attacked by suicide bombers as was the USS Cole. The United States is not alone in this fight. There have been attacks in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Bali, Spain and Great Britain and countless others. What changed on the evening of September 11th was that I decided that this great country and as many others as I could gather to this cause would strike back.

In striking back, the road to ultimate victory has taken us passed truth and lies, passed intentions and objectives, passed political gains and losses and to great successes at winning battles and great failures at securing peace. For years there was never any real question that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction. After the Gulf War in 1991, the treaty he signed and the UN sanctions he agreed to, made it incumbent upon him to prove that he had destroyed his offensive weapons capabilities. Despite 12 years of U.N. sanctions, he refused to do so. International intelligence is never a perfect science. If you know 70% of the facts you are doing well. After 9/11 I was faced with a choice: I could risk my presidency by attacking Iraq and being wrong about Saddam's WMD capabilities or I could do nothing and risk the safety and security of this country and the security of our allies around the world by being right. I made the choice to act and it is a choice I will never regret.

So, we are today engaged in a global war against Radical Islam and we are faced with the question of how to best win that war and whether or not Iraq remains an essential battle in that larger war. Unfortunately, we are at a disadvantage in this war and in this battle. While our mothers and fathers, indeed the entire nation grieves over the loss of life of our military personnel in this struggle, too often the families of our adversaries celebrate the deaths of their sons and daughters and encourage their other children to follow their siblings into martyrdom. Al Qaeda and other terrorists groups in Iraq use suicide bombers and car bombs to purposely kill innocent civilians and foment sectarian violence. My critics suggest that the way to end this violence, the way to win this battle in Iraq, the way to win the war against radical Islam is through timetables, benchmarks and retreat. As your President, as a man who has made mistakes, I say we would again be risking too much if they are wrong.

I have always said that as the Iraqi forces stand up our forces will stand down. Let's set a timetable for that to happen and if the Iraqi military fails to meet their goals let's sit down with members of the Iraqi government and the Democratic Congress and figure out where we have failed, develop a new strategy and agree on a new timetable. In my discussions with Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki I have stressed benchmarks that his government needs to achieve. If they fail to achieve them let's sit down with the Prime Minister and the Congress to see where and why we have failed and see how we can give them better support. What we can never do, what I will never do, is sit down and discuss a date for withdrawal and defeat.

About the Author

Brad Marston is a life long Republican. He has worked on and written for campaigns for state and national senators and representatives. He is also the rightful King of France but is too frightened to go there. You can read more of his thoughts at his political blog AZAMATTEROFAC.T.

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