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President Bush Receives Report from the Iraq Study Group

The Cabinet Room

[In Focus: Renewal in Iraq](#)

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7:58 A.M. EST

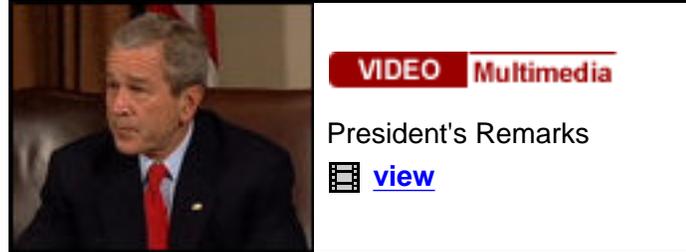
THE PRESIDENT: I just received the Iraq Study Group report, prepared by a distinguished panel of our fellow citizens. I want to thank James Baker and Lee Hamilton and the panel members for spending a lot of time on this really difficult issue. And I thank you for coming into the White House today to give me a copy of this report.

I told the members that this report, called "The Way Forward," will be taken very seriously by this administration. This report gives a very tough assessment of the situation in Iraq. It is a report that brings some really very interesting proposals, and we will take every proposal seriously and we will act in a timely fashion.

The commission is headed up to Congress, and I urge the members of Congress to take this report seriously. While they won't agree with every proposal -- and we probably won't agree with every proposal -- it, nevertheless, is an opportunity to come together and to work together on this important issue.

The country, in my judgment, is tired of pure political bickering that happens in Washington, and they understand that on this important issue of war and peace, it is best for our country to work together. And I understand how difficult that is, but this report will give us all an opportunity to find common ground, for the good of the country -- not for the good of the Republican Party or the Democratic Party, but for the good of the country.

We can achieve long-lasting peace for this country, and it requires tough work. It also requires a strategy that will be effective. And we've got men and women of both political parties around this table who spent a lot of time thinking about the way forward in Iraq, and the way forward in the Middle East, and I can't thank them enough for your time. You could be doing a lot of other things, you could have



had a lot more simple life than to allow your government to call you back into service. But you did allow us to call you back into service, and you made a vital contribution to the country. Our fellow citizens have got to know that it is possible for people of goodwill to come together to help make recommendations on how to deal with a very serious situation.

And we applaud your work. We take it very seriously, and we'll act on it in a timely fashion. Thank you very much.

END 8:01 A.M. EST

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