



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
December 9, 2006

President's Radio Address

[In Focus: Renewal in Iraq](#)

[President's Radio Address](#)

[Audio](#)

[En Español](#)

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. This week, I held important meetings at the White House about the situation in Iraq.

On Monday, I met in the Oval Office with one of Iraq's most influential Shia leaders, His Eminence Abdul Aziz al Hakim. We discussed the desire of the Iraqi people to see their unity government succeed, and how the United States can help them achieve that goal.

On Thursday, I had breakfast with Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain. We discussed the sectarian violence in Iraq and the need to confront extremists inside Iraq and throughout the region. The Prime Minister explains it this way: "The violence is not ... an accident or a result of faulty planning. It is a deliberate strategy. It is the direct result of outside extremists teaming up with internal extremists -- al Qaeda with [the] Sunni insurgents, [and Iran with] Shia militia -- to foment hatred and thus throttle at birth the possibility of non-sectarian democracy."

The Prime Minister and I also discussed the report I received this week from the Iraq Study Group, chaired by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton. Their report provides a straightforward picture of the grave situation we face in Iraq. The Iraq Study Group's report also explicitly endorses the strategic goal we've set in Iraq: an Iraq that can "govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself."

The report went on to say, "In our view, this definition entails an Iraq with a broadly representative government that maintains its territorial integrity, is at peace with its neighbors, denies terrorism a sanctuary, and doesn't brutalize its own people. Given the current situation in Iraq, achieving this goal will require much time and will depend primarily on the actions of the Iraqi people."

I agree with this assessment. I was also encouraged that the Iraq Study

Archives

Radio Address:

[2008](#)

[2007](#)

[2006](#)

[2005](#)

[2004](#)

[2003](#)

[2002](#)

[2001](#)

Radio Interviews:

Group was clear about the consequences of a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq. The group declared that such a withdrawal would "almost certainly produce greater sectarian violence" and lead to "a significant power vacuum, greater human suffering, regional destabilization, and a threat to the global economy." The report went on to say, "If we leave and Iraq descends into chaos, the long-range consequences could eventually require the United States to return."

[2006](#)

[2005](#)

[2004](#)

FAQ

The Iraq Study Group understands the urgency of getting it right in Iraq. The group also understands that while the work ahead will not be easy, success in Iraq is important, and success in Iraq is possible. The group proposed a number of thoughtful recommendations on a way forward for our country in Iraq. My administration is reviewing the report, and we will seriously consider every recommendation. At the same time, the Pentagon, the State Department, and the National Security Council are finishing work on their own reviews of our strategy in Iraq. I look forward to receiving their recommendations. I want to hear all advice as I make the decisions to chart a new course in Iraq.

I can't find a radio station that carries the radio address. Do any stations in Pomona carry it?

[Click here for answer....](#)



I thank the members of the Iraq Study Group for their hard work and for the example of bipartisanship that they have set. The group showed that Americans of different political parties can agree on a common goal in Iraq and come together on ways to achieve it. Now it is the responsibility of all of us in Washington -- Republicans and Democrats alike -- to come together and find greater consensus on the best way forward.

As part of this effort, I met this week with House and Senate leaders from both parties, as well as senior members of the Armed Services, Foreign Relations, and Intelligence Committees. We had productive discussions about our shared duty to forge a bipartisan approach to succeed in Iraq. The future of a vital region of the world and the security of the American people depend on victory in Iraq. I'm confident that we can move beyond our political differences and come together to achieve that victory. I will do my part.

Thank you for listening.

END

Return to this article at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/12/20061209.html>



CLICK HERE TO PRINT