

MEMO FOR SECDEF

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH

Don,

Attached is an excellent memo from Doug Feith on the POTUS speech.

1- The key point is the need to talk about the reasons we went to Iraq for America's security. Iraq must be discussed as part of the war on terrorism. The new draft is a slight improvement, but it really only comes in at the end as a kind of afterthought.

I will talk to Hadley and Gerson about the importance of this point.

Also, two other key points:

- 2- The current language on Iraqi security forces implies that everything we've done up until now has been a failure. Doug's new paragraph would fix that. I did a different mark-up which accomplishes a similar result while keeping some of the current draft text, although I like Doug's better.
- 3- We need to persuade the President to stop talking about bringing the killers of the four contractors to justice. It's not our main problem in Fallujah, and it may not be achievable. We should talk about the much more important and necessary – although also very difficult – goal of not permitting Fallujah to be an enemy sanctuary.

Each of the above three points may require an intervention by you at some point, although I will do everything I can with Hadley and Gerson.

May 23, 2004

Memo to SD

From: Doug Feith

Subject: Comments on Draft #8 of President's speech on Iraq

- The speech, near the end, does a bit more than did the previous version to tie Iraq into the war on terrorism, but not enough, in my view.
 - The speech's centerpiece are the five steps "to help Iraq achieve democracy." On p. 8, 3d full paragraph, it says "we went there to make them [the Iraqis] free."
 - This mixes up our current important goal (i.e., getting Iraq on the path to democratic government) with the strategic rationale for the war, which was to end the danger that Saddam might provide biological or weapons of mass destruction to terrorists for use against us.
 - There is a widespread misconception that the war's rationale was the existence of Iraqi WMD *stockpiles*. This allows critics to say that our failure to find such stockpiles undermines that rationale.
 - If the President ignores this altogether and then implies that the war's rationale was *not* the terrorism/state sponsorship/WMD nexus but rather democracy for Iraqis, the critics may say that he is changing the subject or rewriting history.
 - As I noted to you yesterday, it would be useful for the President to say that taking Iraq off the list of state sponsors of terrorism with WMD programs is an important victory in the war on terrorism.
 - And, moreover, creating a representative, moderate government of a united Iraq moving in the direction of democracy will be an additional victory of great value in countering ideological support for terrorism.
 - A retrospective note: If Saddam Hussein's Iraq were simply a tyranny, but did not have a WMD history and did not support

terrorist groups, the US would not likely have gone to war against it. But it was understood all along that that regime's ouster as part of the war on terrorism would create opportunities to promote democracy in ways that would benefit the Iraqis and possibly transform the greater Middle East. And it was understood that such a transformation could yield strategic benefits in the "battle of ideas" within the war on terrorism.

- On p. 5, last paragraph: Substitute the following in place of the entire paragraph:
 - Iraq's military, police and border forces have begun to take on broader responsibilities. Eventually, they must be the primary defenders of Iraqi security, as American forces are withdrawn. Iraq's security forces are a work in progress. They require training, equipment, leadership and team-building to be able to play the role that they want to play in Iraq – to provide security throughout the country, to handle continuing threats, internal and external, on their own. The US and our coalition partners are helping the Iraqis to create the kind of security forces that Iraq needs to protect the security and freedom of the Iraqi people.

- On p. 2, 4th full paragraph: Should speak of the "plan to achieve victory and launch Iraq toward democracy."
 - The idea of victory for us is important in addition to the idea of democracy for Iraqis.

 - Also, our objective in the near term is to launch the Iraqis toward democracy; we can't ensure in the near term that they reach the goal of a stable democracy.

- On p. 6, 2d full paragraph: There is risk in saying that "American military forces will operate ... as part of a multinational force *authorized by the United Nations*." This is ambiguous – it means either that UNSCR 1511 already authorizes the force, which is true, or that we are counting on the new US-UK proposed UNSCR to authorize the force. But we may not get the new proposed UNSCR.

- On p. 7, 3d paragraph: In past speeches, the President has talked of proposed UNSCRs from the point of view of the UN's being challenged to rise to its responsibilities. The idea was that the UNSCRs are desirable, but not absolutely necessary and if the UNSC did not pass them, it was a failure by the UN, not by the US. This gave us the leverage necessary to get the UNSCRs that we sought, which was good for us and good for the UN.
 - Perhaps we can take care of this by making the last sentence of this paragraph read: "And I am confident that the UN Security Council will rise to its responsibilities again as it did in the three previous post-war resolutions."