

**THE BLOG**

# Funny Rummy & Chatty Cheney

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By Marty Kaplan

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Ya gotta love these guys.

Over at the Pentagon press room today, it was a laff riot. Don Rumsfeld had the Fourth Estate rolling in the aisles. When one reporter began her question about post-traumatic stress among returning troops by saying, “It was reported today...,” Rummy pounced on her use of the passive voice with a twinkle and a barb, displaying timing any Catskills comic would have to envy. With yuks coming fast and furious, the question of what future US troop levels would be necessary for how long if a civil war prevents Iraqis from standing up so we can stand down — well, you can’t blame them for not spoiling the party.

Earlier today, on the picturesque porch of the Vice President’s official residence, Dick Cheney bestowed a one-on-one chat on CNN’s John King, complete with B roll of the family dogs. Cheney explained that even though the future will bring plenty of attacks by terrorists around the world, there would be even more such attacks if there were a timetable for leaving Iraq, because that country is a breeding-ground for terrorism. I guess John King was too hospitable a houseguest to point out that Iraq only became a terrorist incubator as a consequence of the bungled Bush invasion.

Karl Rove has managed to attach electrodes to the gonads of much of the Washington press corps. Every time he amps up the juice, rather than asking the question, Shouldn’t this Administration be held responsible for the hellhole they made in Iraq?, reporters instead ask, What would Democrats do differently?

The onus shouldn’t be on alternatives; the emphasis should be on accountability. Even if Democrats were to hang on to current policy as the least-bad alternative (and they shouldn’t), the Republicans who got us into this trap should — right now, today — be disgraced and discharged for gross incompetence and Constitutional contempt.

But I guess that would be no laughing matter.

Would you care for some more iced tea?

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