



THE BLOG 09/22/2008 05:12 am ET | Updated May 25, 2011

The Cut-and-Runners Have Won, and They're Bush/Cheney



By Marty Kaplan

Now that Condi has negotiated the very timetable for withdrawal from Iraq that this administration has been calling treasonous for the past three years, will anyone hold them accountable for the pure political motivations for their turnaround? Or will America be as obscenely forgiving of this attempt to deprive Obama of an issue as they've been willing to take amnesia pills about the gang that preferred "The Pet Goat" to "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in US"?

Poor John McCain. His hundred-year occupation now looks more imperial, and less sensible, than ever. His bipolar framing of Iraq — Democrats want to surrender, but I'm going to stay there until we win — now smacks more than ever as the dementia of General Jack D. Ripper, rather than the steely resolve of Truman or TR.

The advice of the generals on the ground... the patriots who put country before politics... the contemptible surrenderists... the timetables that mean that the terrorists have won... all the Republican rhetorical crap of the post-Mission Accomplished era, which was masquerading as statesmanship, is now — as the Nixon crowd called it — inoperative. Negotiating a sensible timeline for withdrawal with Iraqis turns out after all to be good for them, and good for us, and good for the war on terror. Who would have thunk it? And who will explain it to the families of the dead and wounded American troops, not to mention to the millions of displaced, demoralized and dead Iraqi civilians?

Depend on a revisionist account from the White House that makes this stunning reversal the inevitable consequence of all they've done before. But just because they're good at propaganda doesn't mean we have to be good at stupid.

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