



THE BLOG

What — No Codpiece?

By Marty Kaplan

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Not content with besmirching Veterans Day, Mr. Mission Accomplished has again used American armed forces as a backdrop to attack Democrats during his refueling stop in Alaska.

Wearing a spiffy flight jacket with a Presidential seal (doubtless a far more handsome piece of wardrobe than he was issued by the Texas Air National Guard), he charged that Democrats were giving aid and comfort to the enemy and undermining our troops. Given the poll numbers about Bush's integrity, and the public's view of the imminent danger rationale he used to justify launching a pre-emptive war, he might as well have charged that all Americans hate America.

On Friday, John Kerry was in Bush's crosshairs; today, it was Senators Reid, Rockefeller and Levin. Bush's idea of a stinging attack is to remind us of how successful he was in suppressing grave doubts about the reliability of prewar intelligence. At best, Bush is saying, "These guys were as stupid as I was!" At worst, he's saying, "Look how well I snowed them!"

His charge now is that his opponents are trying to rewrite history. I wonder if Stalin, airbrushing a Politburo May Day photo, ever tried that line of attack.

On the eve of an overseas mission, Karl Rove apparently wants to wage the prestige of the United States on a game of "Who Do You Trust?" I think Bush would have a much better shot if he dressed in something that reads "Trust"; I know he's Commander-in-Chief, but that quasi-military look just doesn't look authentic on him. How about a lab coat and a stethoscope? Or those cool dress whites that the Surgeon-General gets to wear?

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