

**THE BLOG**

The Mission Is Complete!

By Marty Kaplan

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I think I have a way out of Iraq.

In recent weeks, and continuing now on his trip to the Baltics, President Bush has been repeating his mideast mantra: “I will not pull out until the mission is complete.”

Ok, so here’s his lifeline: the first, real, true, clear, explicitly-stated mission for invading Iraq was to find Saddam’s WMD.

Mission complete!

Forget the subsequent, ex post facto missions — the freedom-on-the-march mission, the stand-up-stand-down mission, the fight-them-there-so-we-don’t-have-to-fight-them-here mission. Those came later, when the wussies in the White House insisted on snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.

Remember, Mr. President? You told us. You said we had to mount a pre-emptive invasion of Iraq to find the WMDs so that Saddam couldn’t help al-Qaeda make the next 9/11 nuclear. So we did the shock-and-awe thing. We turned Iraq upside down looking for WMD. And what we found was — well, actually, we found that there weren’t any. And I say that finding no WMD is just as good as finding any WMD. Either way, al-Qaeda doesn’t get ‘em.

So yes, we have done what we set out to do. If only he would peel off the layers of mission-creep, the President would realize that he has every right to suit up as Top Gun and stand under that sign on the battleship. If he wants to change “accomplished” to “complete,” no one’s gonna carp. The strategy for victory has worked. It really was a slam dunk. We cake-walked our way through the country, following Hans Blix’s footprints. The Fox crews threw flowers at us. Just like in that White House Correspondents Association video, we looked under here, we looked under there, and there were absolutely, positively no WMD to be found. Give him a ticker tape parade, carve him onto Mount Rushmore, build him a Presidential library worthy of the Pharaohs, let him dance in the end zone if he wants, but please, Mr. President, take yes for an answer and start bringing our boys and girls home.

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