

Q The President, himself, is not going to measure success based on increased violence that may occur, and he doesn't want the American people to do that?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: No, but I think -- what ultimately -- you've got a whole series of things. First, let's take a look at Iraqi commitments and fulfilling those. Let's take a look, also, at what happens on the civil front. Then you're going to have to take a look at the fact that knowing that there is likely going to be some increased violence in the short run, are we going to lead to the point where you end up subduing those who are committing acts of violence, and at the same time, forcing those who might either be inclined not to play active roles in supporting the government, or might be inclined to try to go along with the bad actors -- have them -- force them to make a choice.

That has been part of the calculus all along. But the problem is, there has not been consequence for bad behavior in many cases, and now there has to be consequences, and those consequences have to be clear, and they have to be clear enough that people are going to make decisions on their own about which path they're going to pursue.

In many cases, the failure to provide security within Baghdad encouraged people to make their own deals -- either to say, we think this militia is going to be more effective, we think this criminal band is going to be effective, this group of rejectionists -- they're going to protect me. That is an unacceptable situation. Ultimately, it is absolutely essential to build the confidence in the security forces, including the police, so that people will make the choice to support the government, rather than to cast their lot with those who are actively undermining.

Q To clarify, what is "short run"?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: What do you mean short run?

Q In the President's mind?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: No, what is short run in your mind? It's one of those --

Q It doesn't make any difference to me. The American people -- said they're skeptical, there's lack of patience.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Right. And the President is going to talk about that. But if you're trying to define a term that vague, I think it's less useful. What's going to be primarily useful -- and again, I apologize --

Q He's Commander-in-Chief. He has to have a --

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Let me finish the answer, and then I hope it will be useful to you. The fact is there is not going to be a fact sheet that says "the definition of short run is." We're already telling you that on February 1st we expect there to be a brigade, an Iraqi brigade in Baghdad,