

leveled with the public" and "rarely was the voice of realism on the Iraq War" is not supported by the public record.

In fact, President Bush remained upfront with the American people about the challenges and conditions in Iraq, while also taking care to reinforce our overall objectives and to support the men and women of our Armed Forces engaged in combat in Iraq.

The President's public statements show that he consistently recognized the difficulties of our mission in Iraq:

President Bush: "I wish I could tell you that the progress made in Tal Afar is the same in every single part of Iraq. It's not. Though most of the country has remained relatively peaceful, in some parts of Iraq the enemy is carrying out savage acts of violence, particularly in Baghdad and the surrounding areas of Baghdad." (President George W. Bush, Press Conference, Cleveland, OH, 3/20/06)

President Bush: "No question, the fighting is tough. No question, the enemy is violent and mean. But the enemy doesn't stand for anything. They have no message of hope. They have no positive philosophy. All they can do is kill and hope that the government splits up, or that the American people lose their will. And I keep reminding the American people that the stakes are worth it. It is worth it to help Iraq succeed." (President George W. Bush, Press Conference, Camp David, 6/12/06)

President Bush: "Iraq has seen a rise of terrorist and insurgent movements that use brutal and indiscriminate violence to frustrate the desire of the Iraqi people for freedom and peace. . . . Now these enemies have launched a new effort. They have embarked on a bloody campaign of sectarian violence, which they hope will plunge Iraq into a civil war." (President George W. Bush, Address at the American Legion National Convention, 08/31/06)

President Bush: "I know many Americans are not satisfied with the situation in Iraq. I'm not satisfied, either. And that is why we're taking new steps to help secure Baghdad, and constantly adjusting our tactics across the country to meet the changing threat. But we cannot allow our dissatisfaction to turn into disillusionment about our purpose in this war. We must not look at every success of the enemy as a mistake on our part, cause for an investigation, or a reason to call for our troops to come home. We must not fall prey to the sophisticated propaganda by the enemy, who is trying to undermine our confidence and make us believe that our presence in Iraq is the cause of all its problems. If I did not think our mission in Iraq was vital to America's security, I'd bring our troops home tomorrow. I met too many wives and husbands who have lost their partners in life, too many children who won't ever see their mom and dad again. I owe it to them and to the families who still have loved ones in harm's way to ensure that their sacrifices are not in vain." (President George W. Bush, Press Conference, The White House, 10/25/06)