

Bush searching for new Iraq strategies

By Mark Steffen
News Editor

What began as a simple, stay-the-course option for Iraq has become an open forum for advice on U.S. involvement.

For the first time in his presidency, President Bush admittedly asked for consultations concerning Iraq from his advisors over a three-day period on a complex set of issues that "range from military strategy and tactical decisions to economic and political and diplomatic matters," White House counselor Dan Bartlett said Sunday.

After the retaliation faced by Bush from critics who said his unwavering policies on Iraq cost the Republicans both houses of Congress, his most recent speeches still echo his previous statements.

President Bush regards success in Iraq as a country that governs, defends itself, that is a free society, that serves as an ally in this war on terror. Experts in Washington are expecting Bush to show that he isn't alone in this thinking and will search for help from anyone close by.

Some of his closest advisors include Stephen Biddle of the Council of Foreign Relations, Eliot Cohen of the School of Advanced International Studies, and three retired Army generals.

With pressure mounting to revamp the strategy in Iraq, some strategies suggested would be either a short-term buildup of troops or a generally slow troop withdrawal from the country by March 2008. Another option would be engaging in talks with Iran and Syria as part of a new

diplomatic initiative.

On Tuesday, Bush will meet via video conference with senior military commanders and the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad, and then host Iraqi Vice President Tariq al-Hashemi in the Oval Office. On Wednesday, he meets with officials at the Pentagon.

White House press secretary Tony Snow said Bush hopes to unveil any new decisions by Christmas but that timing is objective. "It's something that we would like to see, but I'm not going to promise it," Snow said.

The time for change has come at a time when Americans' dissatisfaction with the president's handling of the war in Iraq is at an all time high of seventy one percent. The Bush Administration is looking to reverse their trend of low ratings with their new decisions on policy.

Because many of Iraq's leading experts are certain the war will be much longer than originally thought, the general public is urged to remain patient and support troops overseas.

When asked their views on America's involvement in Iraq and the best solution, many of today's high school students feel the war is unjustified, and they do not see a politician today with any clear ideas on how to complete the intended missions of bringing democracy to the country.

Similar polls indicate that many Americans are in favor of at least a small troop reduction by the end of the year. Bush is expected to eventually announce a timetable for departure.

Congress discusses draft

By: David Spitzfaden
News Reporter

When people think of the U.S. military, they usually think of it being a voluntary system. However, recent suggestions made by a senior New York representative may change that.

Republican Representative Charles Rangel doesn't think this because we need more people in the armed forces, but he thinks that the President and Congress would not have sent troops to the Middle East if a draft were used.

Rangel argued his point by saying, "There's no question in my mind that this President and this administration would never have invaded Iraq, especially on the flimsy evidence that was presented to the Congress, if indeed we had a draft and the administration thought that their kids from their communities would be placed in harm's way."

Under Rangel's proposed plan the draft wouldn't be issued until the beginning of the new year and would

call all men and women from the ages of 18-42.

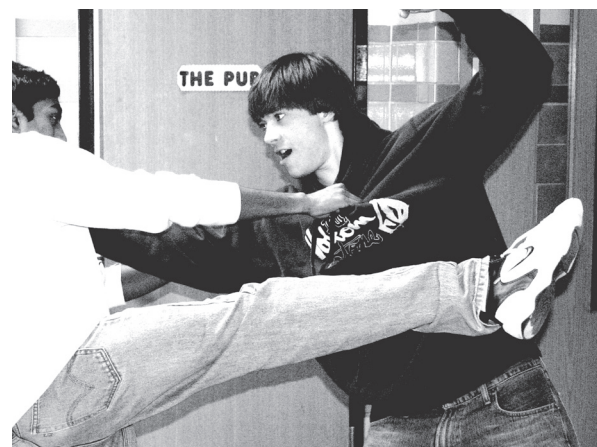
Although his plan would increase troops in Iraq, it doesn't seem to be getting any attention from the House or the Senate because no one else supports the idea. Congressman in both the House of Representatives and the Senate point to America's past draft policy and the many who avoided it.

Republican leaders also disagree with their fellow party member arguing that all-voluntary Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Navy is doing just fine and that there is no need for a draft.

Apparently that's what the American people think too; seven out of every ten people oppose the draft according to recent polls.

This attempt to reinstate the draft is not the first by Charles Rangel. In 2003, he supported a call of all men and women ages 18 to 26 to sign up for the draft.

Neither attempt went anywhere in Congress and no other issues have been brought up about mandatory military service.



Ravi Yada and Mark Steffen show the ugly face of what life can be like in school. (Photo by Hussain)

Fights disturbing MHS peace

By: Karin Scott
News Reporter

Everyone has heard "fight" being yelled through the halls or cafeteria, followed by rushing towards the feuding people to see what is going to happen. Occasionally, a teacher will even get involved.

Some of us have been lucky enough to see Mr. Mahieu break up a fight using his superhuman strength. No matter who breaks up the fight, there will be consequences for the guilty parties.

Detective Valladeres is in charge of assigning the consequences for being involved in a dispute. He's also the link to the

police if that is needed to be enforced. This is Detective Valladares' first year at MHS and he has already had to deal with 10-15 fights. The usual punishment for a fight is a suspension (either in-school or out of school). Also, if need be, an arrest will take place.

Detective Valladares' advice about resolving a controversy is, "To sit down and talk it out. Use words, not actions."

Even though they may provide some diversion, the consequences are not worth it. Detective Valladares recommends taking a deep breath and trying to talk it out.



Congratulations to the following students, you have won a free milkshake from Whiteys! Stop by the Pub to pick up your certificate!

Danny Lee Rummerfield - 9th Grade
Timothy Burns - 10th Grade
Tim Gibson - 11th Grade
Robert Winterbottom - 12th Grade