

## A Fork In The Road

Which is true,

**Iraqis Hail Falluja 'Victory' as U.S. Changes Tack**

or

**an astonishing success by the USMC**

or could it conceivably be both?

If the US has really 'changed tack' to allow the fighters in Falluja (including the perpetrators of the **atrocities** against the four Americans which sparked the present confrontation) either to escape or to retain control of their stronghold, it constitutes a major defeat for the Coalition and a catastrophe for Iraq and the world. For it means the end of hope for a functioning civil society in Iraq. No one will participate in civil institutions if their armed and murderous enemies are still permitted to operate with impunity.

On the other hand, if what we are seeing is merely part of a complex manoeuvre which is about to break the power of the faction currently controlling part of Falluja, then it is one of the most important victories so far in the liberation of Iraq and in the broader War Against Terror.

We are approaching a fork in the road.

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**Update:** Wretchard at **Belmont Club** is sticking to his interpretation: **Retreat, Hell!**

We hope he's right.

**Another update: And again.**

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