

## Bush concerned over message on Iraq

*by UPI*

WASHINGTON - U.S. President George W. Bush Thursday expressed concern over the message the Congress is sending by holding up funding for the Iraq war.

Following a Pentagon briefing on the war, Bush said he is concerned "about what happens in the Middle East if the United States doesn't keep its word."

The president said we should be concerned especially about the message perceived by al-Qaida, calling the terror group "public enemy No. 1."

"There are strategic consequences to what we say here," Bush said.

Bush met with a group of Republican congressional leaders over the Iraq funding issue and called the discussions candid.

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