



On MoveOn.org's recent [Virtual Town Hall Meeting](#), Democratic presidential candidates were asked by a woman from Coconut Grove, Florida "In your opinion, what is the best and fastest way to get out of Iraq?" Here is Sen. Joe Biden's (D-DE) response:

To be responsible, one has to be able to answer a two-word question in my view after you've put forward what you think should be done, and that is: Then what? After we pull our troops out, then what? After we cap troops, then what? After we cut partial funding, then what?

This is very reminiscent of a response given by President Jed Bartlett in a fictional debate with a Republican challenger in season 4 of *The West Wing*. In response to Florida Gov.

Richie's "ten word answer" to a question, Bartlett responds:

What comes next? That's the important thing, what comes next? Every once in a while, every once in a while, there's a day with an absolute right and an absolute wrong, but those days almost always include body counts. Other than that, there aren't very many un-nuanced moments in leading a country that's way too big for ten words. I'm the President of the United States, not the President of the people who agree with me.

Now is Sen. Biden honestly asking the question or is he (consciously or not) influenced by the hidden hand of Aaron Sorkin, much as he was guided by the voices of Abraham Lincoln and [Neil Kinnock](#) during his aborted 1988 presidential campaign?

For what it's worth, **Pawn** agrees with Biden on this (and with Bartlett on his query). There are no good answers on Iraq, and very few good questions, for that matter. It's a shame that Biden's own policy positions are nowhere near as nuanced as the understanding revealed by his simple question, "Then what?"