

DO THEY THINK CHENEY MAKES A BETTER SUPPLICANT THAN BUSH?

So they're shipping Dick off to Saudi Arabia to beg King Abdullah to let loose the oil so the economy doesn't nosedive under Bush's Cheney's watch.

Q Will he repeat the request to the Saudis to ask OPEC to raise oil production, a request which was made by the President and turned down by our friends, the Saudis?

MS. PERINO: I'll refer you to the Vice President's office for exactly what he will bring up. But certainly the position of the United States and the President is that we believe that more supplies should be out there on the market. And the President does want OPEC to take into consideration that its biggest customer, the United States, that our economy is weakened, and part of the reason is because of higher oil prices; we think that more supply would help. And I don't anticipate that the Vice President would have any other message than that one.

Q So he will, obviously, then, have that message.

MS. PERINO: I'm not – I can't tell you exactly what the Vice President is going to say and I'm not going to – I'll let him have his meetings and then they can read them for you while you guys are on the road.

It seems like it was just two months ago that Bush tried to beg for more oil, only to have

Abdullah blow off the request.

I'm curious precisely what kind of leverage Dick Cheney might have over the Saudis that Bush doesn't have? Does the fact that our economy has gotten worse and people are beginning to talk about a Citibank failure change things for the Saudis? Or is Dick just going to beg again because Bush suddenly realized that we're getting close to \$4/gallon gasoline?