

THE RISING REPUBLICAN RIFT

Republicans Split Between Staying-the-Course or Calling for Change in Iraq

Despite the fact that 70 percent of Americans support withdrawing almost all U.S. troops from Iraq by April, despite the fact that the war in Iraq is costing taxpayers \$10 billion a month, and despite the fact that several senior Senate Republicans have joined Democrats in calling for a new strategy in Iraq, there are still many Congressional Republicans who continue to staunchly support President's failed Iraq policy. The divisions among Republicans will become even more pronounced as Democrats continue to push for a responsible redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq.

REPUBLICANS JOINING DEMOCRATS IN THE CALL FOR CHANGE

Senator George Voinovich (R-OH): "There's a sense among Republicans that they would love the president to announce he's putting together a comprehensive plan that involves an exit strategy." [Roll Call, 7/12/07]

"Several veteran Republicans have called on Bush to change course, and Sen. Gordon Smith, R-Oregon, on Wednesday became the first member of his party to announce on the Senate floor that he will support legislation that orders a troop withdrawal to begin within 120 days, to be completed by next April 30." [USA Today, 7/12/07]

Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME): "The tide has turned... they obviously would prefer that we wait until September, but my view is that we should send a very strong message now." [NY Times, 7/11/07]

Representative Phil English (R-PA): "Many of us agree with the comments of Senator Lugar and Senator Voinovich and feel the administration needs to correct its course and change its emphasis." [The Hill, 7/11/07]

VS.

REPUBLICANS SUPPORTING BUSH, STOPPING CHANGE IN IRAQ

"Senate Republicans are holding the line against a Democratic push to legislate major changes in the way President Bush is waging the war in Iraq." [CQ Today, 7/12/07]

"Senate Republican leaders yesterday sought to block bipartisan efforts to force a change in the American military mission in Iraq." [Washington Post, 7/11/07]

"House Minority Leader John Boehner (R-Ohio) provided a cringe-worthy moment at the weekly Conference meeting Wednesday by referring to Senate Republicans who recently have come out against the war as 'wimps.'" [Roll Call, 7/12/07]

Representative Mike Pence (R-IN): "The good news of the assessments that have come before Congress is that we have been achieving some progress as a result of the President's surge strategy on the ground." [House Floor, 7/12/07]

"Representative Dan Burton (R-IN): "I don't understand why we're jumping the gun and trying to force withdrawal right now when General Petraeus who talked to all of us has not had a chance to succeed." [House Floor, 7/12/07]

When will these Republicans join their colleagues in calling for a responsible redeployment and a true change in Iraq?

Prepared by the Office of Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, 7/12/07