

DEMOCRATS HAVE CHANGED THE DEBATE ON IRAQ

*The Question Today Is: How Much Longer Will House Republicans
Cling to Bush's Stay-the-Course Strategy?*

“Republican support for the Iraq war is slipping by the day.”

- AP, 6/26/07

After six months in the Majority, House and Senate Democrats are changing the debate on the war in Iraq, insisting that the Bush Administration and Iraqi government be accountable, enacting benchmarks to measure progress (or the lack thereof), and challenging President Bush's stay-the-course strategy. Under pressure from Democrats and the American public, an increasing number of Senate Republicans are distancing themselves from the President's policy, even as House Republicans continue to cling to it. The question now is: When will the Rubberstamp House Republicans face reality and join Democrats and the American people in demanding a real change and a responsible redeployment from Iraq?

Several Senior Senate Republicans Express Deep Skepticism About Bush Iraq Policy:

Sen. Richard Lugar (R-IN), Ranking Member, Foreign Relations Committee: “In my judgment, the costs and risks of continuing down the current path outweigh the potential benefits that might be achieved. Persisting indefinitely with the surge strategy will delay policy adjustments that have a better chance of protecting our vital interests over the long term. . . . Our security interests call for a downsizing and redeployment of U.S. military forces to more sustainable positions.” *[Senate Floor, 6/25/07]*

Sen. John Warner (R-VA): “Praised Lugar's statement as ‘an important and sincere contribution’ to the Iraq debate.” *[The Washington Post, 6/27/07]*

Sen. George Voinovich (R-OH) urged “the President to develop ‘a comprehensive plan for our country's gradual military disengagement’ from Iraq.” *[The Washington Post, 6/26/07]*

More Republicans Say the Dam Could Be About to Break:

“After the Fourth of July recess, ‘you'll be hearing a number of statements from other (Republican) colleagues,’ predicted **Sen. John Warner**, a longtime skeptic of the war strategy.” *[USA Today, 6/27/07]*

“The one real disappointment is that the Iraqi government has not stepped up and fulfilled what we think is the role that they need to play,” said **Sen. Richard M. Burr (R-NC)**. “If that doesn't happen quickly, I'm sure more of us will come to the conclusion that Senator Lugar has.” *[NY Times, 6/27/07]*

Sen. Gordon Smith (R-OR): “I can...think of a dozen Republican senators who will be with me in September.” *[The Washington Post, 6/17/07]*

Other Republicans Have Hinted That Time Is Running Out:

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY): “I anticipate that we'll probably be going in a different direction in some way in Iraq [in September].” *[AP, 6/5/07]*

Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME): “It seems to me the surge [in forces] is not working as well as we hoped.” *[AP, 6/5/07]*

Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-NE): “The only lasting answer to Iraq's anguish will come from a political resolution. There will be no military solution in Iraq.” *[The Washington Post, 4/22/07]*

**Will House Republicans Listen to the American People
or Will They Continue to Rubberstamp a Failing Policy?**

Prepared by the Office of Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, 6/27/07