

## Democrats say “no” to Withdrawal

By [Mike Whitney](#)

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It will be a while before they clear away the carnage from the floor of the House of Representatives, but the mighty birds are already circling overhead eyeballing the carrion below.

Last night, the Democratic Party, that rudderless, ideologically-challenged coterie of losers and sycophants, killed whatever chance they may have had of leading country out of the Iraqi nightmare. In a grossly lopsided vote of 403 to 3 the Democrats helped to defeat a bill that demanded the immediate withdrawal of American troops from Iraq. Their vote ignores the 63% of Americans who want to see a speedy exit from Iraq and it strengthens the Republican agenda of open-ended support for the President. In the process, they further disgraced the one man who towered above the wretched chatter of beltway politics and defended the soldiers dying in the field, John Murtha.

Murtha has been the most hawkish of the Democrats, staunchly supportive of the president and his war. Last week, however, he surprised everyone by publicly denouncing Iraq as [“a flawed policy wrapped in an illusion”](#) and calling for an immediate withdrawal. Since then, Murtha, a decorated combat veteran, has been viciously trashed by the Bush-Rove smear machine; another victim of the ruinous “swift-boat” strategy.

Yesterday, on the floor of the House Rep. Jean Schmidt suggested that Murtha, the recipient of two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star, was a coward.

She reiterated the message she had received earlier in the day from a Marine Colonel who told her to [“send Congress a message: Cowards cut and run. Marines never do”](#). Schmidt’s remarks caused pandemonium in the chamber.

The battle lines are drawn between Democrats and Republicans and the acrimony has never been greater. So, why did the Democrats retreat from the bill and leave the impression that Murtha was left hanging out to dry?

In fact, the Republicans cleverly changed the wording of the Murtha bill by saying that all troop deployments should be “terminated immediately”; substantially different from Murtha’s call for a coordinated withdrawal leaving a rapid “reaction force” in the region. As it turned out, even Murtha voted with the majority.

But, the wording was immaterial. The vote was mainly symbolic anyway; we’re not leaving Iraq anytime soon. The Democrats had the opportunity to be a credible opposition party and give Bush a bloody nose in the process. Instead, they blew it. They slinked away from the brawl and headed for the exits. They continue to ignore the mood of the country and fail to capitalize on the vulnerabilities of their rivals.

The American people aren't in the mood for compromise and they don't give a hoot about perfectly written legislation. They are looking for someone to stop Bush any way possible.

That's it; just say No.

The nation is pouring blood and treasure into a bottomless sand-pit with no prospect for success. In less than two years American citizens will have to have "papers" (standardized Federal ID) just to travel around the country. National Security Letters and "lone wolf" provisions in the Patriot Act allow the FBI to search through all of one's personal belongings or records without judicial approval. The administration has set up a National Security Service (NSS) that provides Bush with his own KGB style secret police force, independent of congressional oversight. And, the court has decided that the president can indefinitely imprison American citizens without charging them with a crime.

This is no time for the blundering Democrats to seek out a "nuanced political position". We're looking for roadblocks, not policy.

The reality is there is no leadership in the Democratic Party. The people at the top, Clinton, Biden, Dodd, Edwards and Kerry, are all "go-along, get along" toadies who've caved in on every issue of consequence. All of them have been staunch supporters of the war and refuse to even whisper the word "withdrawal" fearing their powerful constituents will throw them overboard.

There's no chance the Democrats will lead us out of this quagmire; they're in it up to their axels. They may moan about "being misled" by the president, but don't take that as a condemnation of the war. They're already preening their rhetoric about a "victory strategy" followed by the steady increase of American servicemen deployed to the desert meat-grinder.

So, who cares if they take a drubbing on the House floor?

They are a party adrift; steadily sinking from the arrogance and ideological vacuity of their leaders. It would be better for everyone if they just packed their bags and went home.

Good riddance.

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