



## **The Good News is Bad News. At least it is for politicians who have bet on America's defeat**

(Published in *Scripps Howard Service News*, August 1, 2007)

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**Colaboraciones n° 1873**

**August 10, 2007**

It's tough being a member of Congress. Even if you're in the majority, as is Rep. Nancy Boyda of Kansas, you never know when your ears may be assaulted by outrageous and offensive ideas.

Like what? At a recent hearing of the Armed Services Committee, retired Gen. Jack Keane said "progress is being made" by U.S. military forces in Iraq; "We are on the offensive and we have the momentum," he added. The freshman congresswoman was so distressed by these remarks that she got up and she walked out.

There was "only so much" she could take, she explained, so she "had to leave the room ... after so much of the frustration of having to

listen to what we listened to." She said she was worried, too, that General Keane's remarks "will in fact show up in the media and further divide this country." Hey, that could happen!

Lucky for Rep. Boyda, Congress in August goes on vacation. One hopes she can rest and recover, while blocking out any unwelcome and divisive news about American military successes in Iraq resulting from the new strategy being pursued by Gen. David Petraeus and his troops.

For example, let's hope she never hears what General Petraeus' top deputy, Lieutenant Gen. Ray Odierno, recently reported: A "growing list of cities" that until recently were under al-Qaeda control have now

been "liberated." General Odierno added that "greater than 50 percent of Baghdad is currently in control of coalition or Iraqi security forces. ... I can think of no major population center in Iraq that is an al Qaeda safe haven today."

If Rep. Boyda is careful about which television stations she watches, she need never learn who is primarily responsible for the carnage in Iraq . Fox News' Chris Wallace recently asked General Petraeus if most of the violence is the result of a Sunni-Shia civil war. The general replied that, in fact, it is al-Qaeda that is "carrying out the bulk of the sensational attacks, the suicide car bomb attacks, suicide vest attacks, and so forth...all of the individuals in the intelligence community, General [Stanley] McChrystal, the head of our Joint Special Operations Command, all of us feel that the central front of al Qaeda's terror war is focused on Iraq."

Nor does she need to know that, according to Brigadier General Mick Bednarek, in Iraq today "al Qaeda is on the run... We are going into places that the coalition has not had the sufficient troop strength and force size to go before, and we're going after them, and they will not find safe haven in this country."

With a little effort, the congresswoman can remain ignorant of the likely consequences should Congress force the administration to withdraw American troops before their mission is completed. Major General Rick Lynch, commander of the 3rd Infantry Division, told

CNN's Jamie McIntyre: "Those surge forces are giving us the capability we have now to take the fight to the enemy, and the enemy only responds to force and we now have that force. ... If those surge forces go away, that capability goes away ... if you did that ...you'd find the enemy regaining ground, re-establishing a sanctuary ... Over time we can turn the area over to Iraqi security forces, and then we'll be ready to do something that looks like a withdrawal. ... People keep wanting to put a timeframe on this. It's just not possible."

Surely you can see how possession of such information would make it more difficult for Congresswoman Boyda to do her job -- second-guessing military commanders? And she's right that such information can divide Americans. It might even stimulate serious debate -- a frightening thought.

As House Majority Whip James Clyburn suggested this week, success in Iraq also would be awkward for those who have bet their political chips on American failure.

To be precise, Clyburn said that it would be "a real big problem for us" should General Petraeus return to Washington next month and present a positive report on progress in Iraq . Moderate Democrats might listen and decide that for America to be defeated in Iraq by al-Qaeda and Iranian-backed militias is neither inevitable nor in the national interest. These same moderate Democrats also might decide that, for them,

the national interest trumps the partisan interest.

If Congressman Boyda were to hear that, she wouldn't leave the room - they'd have to carry her out.

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