

U.S. budget measure not linked to troops

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- Democratic leaders said a budget deal containing funds for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is likely to pass without provisions for U.S. troop withdrawals. Democratic lawmakers said Congress is likely to pass as much as \$70 billion in war funding, but without measures calling for the redeployment of many of the U.S. troops in Iraq by the end of 2008, CNN reported Thursday. Democratic leaders said the measure may spark controversy among the party faithful who have been outspoken against the war. The base of the Democratic Party expressed concern of the lack of pressure exerted on U.S. President George Bush to change the Iraq policy. Senate Republicans said they would block any budget deal that didn't contain at least some of the \$200 billion in war funding requested by the Bush administration. Democrats point to the measure as a victory that curtails the Bush administration's war effort. "What is for sure is he will not get all \$200 billion," said a senior Democratic. "Whatever number it is, it is much less than what the president asked for. For the first time in this war, he has received less than his request."

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