

McCain, Obama moving to center on Iraq

by UPI

LOS ANGELES -- Despite the emotion the Iraq war causes among voters, analysts say the presumptive U.S. presidential nominees have moved toward a pragmatic center on the issue. Republican hopeful Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Democratic front-runner Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., are getting close to meeting in the middle on Iraq, with McCain saying he'd like to get troops out by 2013 and Obama pushing a plan that would withdraw all combat brigades within 18 months, the Los Angeles Times said in a report published Friday. McCain, the Times said, has bowed to the overwhelming unpopularity of the war after once saying he could envision a U.S. military presence there for many years, while Obama is acknowledging that withdrawing from Iraq could be a costly and time-consuming undertaking. "It's one thing to stake out a relatively uncompromising position early in the presidential process," Stuart Rothenberg, editor of the nonpartisan Rothenberg Political Report told the Times. "But when the idea that you might move into the Oval Office hits you squarely between the eyes, it reminds you that there's a time to be pragmatic about these things."

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