The Democratic wimp-out

by Cal_Thomas

Senate Democrats, who had announced an all-nighter Tuesday to reiterate their anti-war positions, packed it in shortly before midnight, surrendering to a greater desire for a few hours sleep. Only a handful of stalwart senators kept the Senate - technically - in session. We know that Senate Democrats don't have the staying power to win the war in Iraq, but can't they even make it through the night without some shuteye?"Harry, sweetheart," said Sen. Barbara Boxer of California, who led a group of Democrats in pleading with Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid for a delay in voting, "5:30 or 6?" Reid complied and senators abandoned the chamber so fast you would have thought it was on fire. This was not a demonstration of the strength needed to strike fear in the hearts of those who can tough it out in caves while plotting new ways to destroy us.Eliza Doolittle could have "danced all night," but the prospect of staying awake all night was too much for the aging bodies and weakened spirits of most senators. Having surrendered to the loony left and having sent signals to our enemies that they are no longer in the fight to win it, most went to sleep.One never hears Democrats speaking of victory, only retreat. They have embraced defeat, unwilling to wait for the "new strategy" they had demanded to work. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, Texas Republican, noted that the surge of 30,000 American troops is in its infancy and in fact has just been completed in the last two weeks "and yet we're pulling the rug out from under the new plan. . We cannot be the greatest country on earth and say, 'don't trust us if you're our ally and don't fear us if you're our enemy.' And that's exactly what we would be doing if we leave Iraq because Congress sets a deadline, regardless of what's happening on the ground in Iraq."Democrats are fond of saying that the United States should be fighting al-Qaida, but not in Iraq, and that if we pull out, or pull back, we will have more resources to fight terrorists. This is like saying we should not have fought the Japanese in World War II in order to devote more resources to defeating Hitler. There were some who argued that way and others who, before 1939, said Hitler was not a threat to America and that we should stay out of a European war.

Since the American Revolution, there have always been naysayers, doubters, fellow travelers and willing or duped enablers of America's enemies. There have been politicians, academics, clergy and journalists who claimed that U.S. foreign policy, whether promoted by a Democratic or Republican president, was the wrong policy and a different one should be tried. Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt had strong opposition to their conduct of the Civil War and World War II. Harry Truman left office with record low approval ratings. Those presidents eventually won favor from historians and most Americans because they stuck to their guns - figuratively and literally - and were proved right.No one can predict whether the policy in Iraq and against terrorism by the Bush-Cheney administration will similarly be proven correct. We may not know until both men are long gone from politics and possibly many years after they have left this earth. This is a world war unlike any we have ever fought and it cannot be fought like we fought other wars.The latest National Intelligence Estimate concludes that al-Qaida is continuing to focus on high profile political, economic and infrastructure targets in America for the purpose of causing mass casualties, visually dramatic destruction, economic aftershocks and fear. Democrats argue that Iraq has emboldened them and served as a recruiting tool. But American troops were not in Iraq on Sept. 11, 2001, or in 1993 when the World Trade Center was first hit. Numerous other attacks against American forces and interests occurred before the Iraq War. Al-Qaida needs no excuse for recruiting and killing Americans.There will be plenty of time for debate in September when the report on the effectiveness of the surge comes from Gen. David Petraeus. Do Democrats fear it will be a positive report and so they are doing their best to undermine it now? Has our politics become so cynical that some would prefer defeat for political advantage than victory because it might aid the "other side," meaning Republicans?If so, God help us.(Direct all MAIL for Cal Thomas to: Tribune Media Services, 2225 Kenmore Ave., Suite 114, Buffalo, N.Y. 14207. Readers may also e-mail Cal Thomas at tmseditors@tribune.com.(c) 2007 Tribune Media Services, Inc.