

DOG N PONY TOO

I suspect because of the dynamics of the Committee, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee actually seems to be making progress. So far this hearing, we have established:

1. Everyone has had it with this war—Republican and Democrat.
2. The biggest threat to the United States from Al Qaeda is in Pakistan and Afghanistan, not in Iraq (as Biden got Crocker, the former Ambassador to Pakistan, to admit).
3. Petraeus and Crocker agree with Barbara Boxer and a bunch of other Republican and Democratic Senators—and presumably will go tell Bush as much—that Iraq has got to start paying for its own militias.
4. We will never remove the threats of AQI and Iranian influence in Iraq, so the best end point we should strive for is to achieve some kind of stability in Iraq.

There was one moment, when George Voinovich was flogging the fact that we're broke and therefore will be forced to leave in the near term...

Do you realize that that is where we are today? We are bankrupt and the gravy train to Iraq is coming to an end. Is

anyone over there telling the Iraqis
this? [thanks to maryo2 for
transcribing]

...where both Crocker and Petraeus seemed to realize that they have failed to meet Bush's goals—to not only sustain Republican support for the escalation, but also to paint the image that we're winning. As much as anyone, Voiny summed up how bleak things look for us in Iraq.

Now let's hope we can take today's accomplishments (and whatever the House can wring out of Bush's witnesses) and bring this thing to a close.