Why Did Congress So Dishonor General Petraeus?

Description

Update 09/15/2007: Welcome, LIzards and thanks to Charles for his most excellent forums and open threads! Browse around a bit, if you have any interest in naval hisotry and current eventsâ€¦

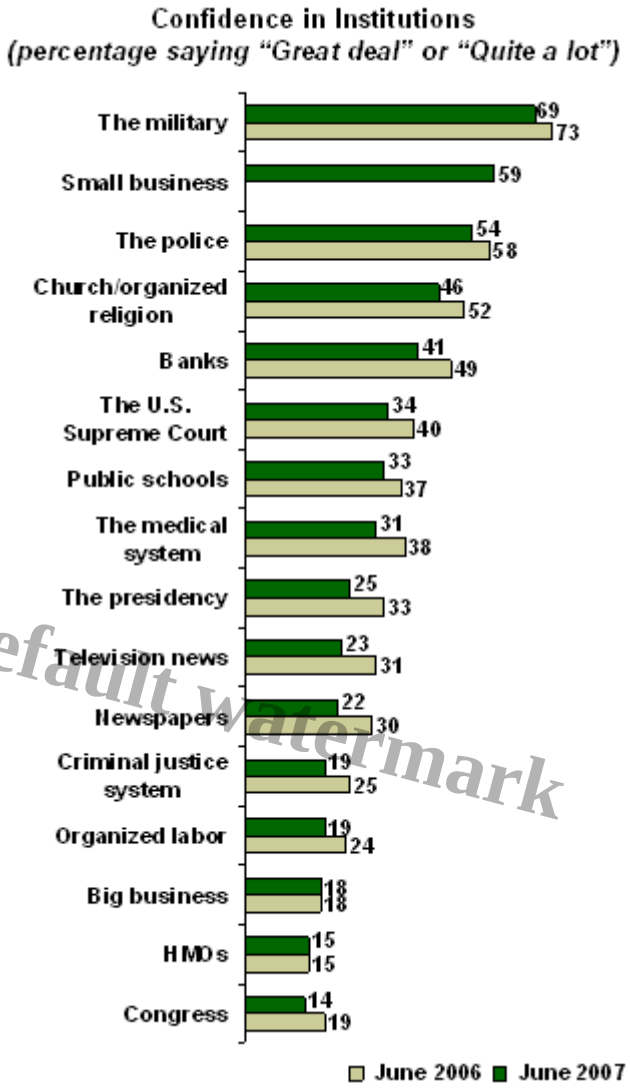
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I think itâ€™s nothing more than shear jealousy, pettiness and hoping people will forget how low their ratings are.

My evidence? Well, first consider the current political environment, with the Democrats having had control of Congress since January this year. From CBS Polls â€œHigh Hopes for New congressâ€• story:

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> [â€¦]
> Sixty-eight percent of those polled said they had optimistic feelings about the 110th Congress, which will be led by Democrats for the first time in 12 years. Just 25 percent said they were pessimistic.
>
> Nearly half expect that this Congress will accomplish more than usual over the next two years.
> [â€¦]



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By June, they had rated lowest in confidence of major American institutions (19%). Thatâ€™s one of the parts of the explanation, but the coupling with the fact from the same Gallup Poll that the Military rated highest of the institution (69%), I believe puts the story in context.By verbally assaulting the top military commander in the war, they get to take a swipe the â€œthe Militaryâ€• in general, complete with the cameras and sound ~~endless blathering~~ bites, for the record.As reported on 9/5/2007, the Gallup data shows people are frustrated with the inaction from Congress:

> Congress is returning from its summer recess at a time when the public is highly dissatisfied with the job it is doing. Last month, Congressâ€™ approval rating was 18% â€" matching the lowest Gallup has measured since it first asked the question in 1974. To gain more insight as to why Americans are so displeased with Congress, an Aug. 23-26, 2007, Gallup Panel survey asked Americans to explain in their own words why they hold the view they do about Congress.
>
> The poll results make clear that Americans who disapprove of the job Congress is doing are frustrated with perceived inaction â€" either in general or in regards to specific issues such as the Iraq war, illegal immigration, or serving the needs of the people. There is also a widely held perception that there is too much bickering and party politics in Congress. [â€¦]

Iâ€™m not sure why Gallup characterized some of the respondents answers as â€œperceived,â€• for it does appear not much, except real bickering has happened. We still donâ€™t even have a Defense Authorization Bill, which was to have been done even before the ~~Iraqi~~American Congress took their vacation in August.

Youâ€™d think, wouldnâ€™t you, that people so hell bent on using polls before deciding what to say at any given moment might take the time to mentally digest what this one tells themâ€¦and maybe, consider getting to work and stopping the bickeringâ€¦

Now, add some fuel to the fire: While Democrats from Congress were posturing for the â€œWe have a staked goat, and youâ€™re itâ€• tactics of the hearings, the American people (using Gallup Poll data) said they have confidence in General Petraeus and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as reported on September 10th:

> As Gen. David Petraeus, commander of U.S. forces in Iraq, prepares to testify before Congress on the situation in Iraq, it is unclear to what extent his report will change American minds on the war. A new USA Today/Gallup poll finds that while a majority of Americans are confident in Petraeusâ€™ recommendations about what to do next in Iraq, most expect that rather than being an objective assessment of the situation in Iraq, the report will be biased to reflect what the Bush administration wants the public to believe. Only about one-third of Americans say the surge of U.S. troops in Iraq is making the situation there better, and most continue to favor a timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq
>
> Trust in Petraeus
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> According to the Sept. 7-8 poll, the public has more trust in Petraeusâ€™ recommendations for what to do next in Iraq than it does in other key leaders involved in developing U.S. policy toward Iraq. Sixty-three percent of Americans say they have a great deal (27%) or a fair amount (36%) of confidence in Petraeusâ€™ recommendations. Fifty-eight percent have confidence in what the â€œJoint Chiefs of Staff and other military leaders at the Pentagonâ€• would recommend.
>
> Americans have far less trust in political leaders than in military leaders when it comes to Iraq policy.
> [â€¦]

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Think about it: If youâ€™re stupid, you get send to fight a war in Iraq, but the man who made this egregious statement (oh, yes, he served in Vietnam), is part of an institution the people have almost no confidence in, and the ones who are fighting the war, wearing a uniform are trusted by more than a simple majority of the populace, to plan a course for the current conflict. My, my, my. I would hope this would make jfk stay awake at night, trying to figure out if Al Gore can help him get his remarks stricken from the Internet.

Did they do it consciously? Iâ€™m beginning to think they didnâ€™t. Had they brought this approach up in a strategic planning session, that someone would have spoken up and said what a stupid move it would be because of the massive backlash from the people. But, as Iâ€™ve commented on before, this very type of behavior is never questioned, for the Democrat Party leadership is effectively devoid of

anyone with any significant military service time, and schooling in sure matters.

I believe both Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, as the most likely front runners for the Presidency have lost votes they were counting on. While many Americans donâ€™t like the war, Iâ€™m not certain they will consider voting in vindictive, petty politicians, who take pleasure, for their personal power gain, to say to the world â€œI donâ€™t trust my military to speak truthâ€• in so many words.

On the other hand, General Petraeusâ€™ calm demeanor is the outcome of being a man who has seen combat. Words from these people cannot harm him. I thought of the talk of two WWII armor officers, who served under Patton, one in particular, who talked about being the the MSM after the War and having people threaten them. They laughed, knowing full well words were no threat to their livesâ€¦I cast General Petraeus in the same role now, as that newspaper editor was in in the 50s and 60s.

The Democrats made a big mis-step these past two weeks. Not only did they appear foolish, they have provided a lot of working material to Republican strategists.

Tracked back @: SteelJaw Scribe

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