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A Defense Technology Blog



Budgeteers To Trump Armed Services Committees

Posted by Bill Sweetman at 11/23/2010 10:33 AM CST

Expecting Rep. Barney Frank to turn up at an occasion organized by the libertarian Cato institute is a bit of a long shot, but that is exactly what the veteran liberal congressman did on Friday, at an event that became an overview discussion of the different budget-hacking proposals that have been aired in Washington in the past month.

On the other side of the debate, the "Defending Defense" alliance - the conservative group that wants to declare the defense budget off-limits - decided not to show up.

Asked about the new leadership in the House armed services and appropriations committees, Frank said that the issue would be more important "if the normal rules applied. But they're not going to be in charge any more." With the nation and congress focused on fiscal issues "the budget committees will be much more important."

Frank says that new and rising representatives are trying (for the first time) to steer away from the appropriations committees since they are likely to be doling out cuts rather than contracts. "It's going to be a pain in the ass, not a perk."

As for the possibility of serious change, Frank added, "I'm encouraged that there is a debate." Mentioning Sen John McCain's attack on newly elected Sen Rand Paul's "isolationism", Frank observed that "you don't do that unless you see that something is getting traction."

Another key quote from the debate, from Cato defense analyst Ben Friedman: "Many of the new Republicans have no coherent position on defense. And that gives me hope."

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Loader2088 wrote:

Barney's crowd aren't in charge anymore.

11/23/2010 11:51 AM CST

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Bill Sweetman wrote:

True, but nobody's ever said he's not a shrewd tactician.

11/23/2010 12:13 PM CST

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AmicusCuriae wrote:

"the budget committees will be much more important." They are and have been most powerful because they provide the gold (as in the Kelly Johnson golden rule). Also appropriate to the appropriations topic is a quote from Tom Wolfe, to whit: "No Bucks, no Buck Rogers

"...And that gives me hope"

Ahh! The audacity of hope.

11/23/2010 12:21 PM CST

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Bobbymike wrote:

Gee Barney's not too much of a libertarian when it comes to taking over the banking sector or auto sector or housing sector or taxing everyone to death but hey defense, "I'm so totally a libertarian"

How soon we forget Barney's response to a constituent question at a town hall when asked how about improving the economy, he said "Just give us more power" now that's libertarian, not!

It would be funny if not so tragic. These far left democrats would disarm the US down to a 50,000 man constabulary, enough to control and imprison Tea Party folks :,), if given the chance.

11/23/2010 2:11 PM CST

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