

## Gates Retirement Opens Door for Graham Appointment

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced last week that he intends to retire next year. His retirement opens the door for the appointment of Sen. Lindsey Graham as Secretary of Defense by President Obama.

Gates was appointed to head the Department of Defense in 2006 by President George W. Bush at the insistence of Democrats who hated his predecessor Don Rumsfeld. President Bush apparently thought the sacrifice of Rumsfeld and others would satisfy them, but he was mistaken. Gates was retained as Secretary of Defense by President Obama as a “token Republican” compatible with the Obama agenda.

Gates has announced his plans to “reallocate \$100 billion of the Defense budget over the next five years by streamlining the Pentagon’s massive bureaucracy and tighten efficiencies” prior to his departure. During a recent news conference he made it clear to reporters that his announced defense cutting initiatives are, “just the beginning.” It is becoming apparent that President Obama intends to place a large portion of the burden of his administration’s excessive spending on the backs of military personnel who are currently engaged in two wars and that Gates will do the “dirty deed” on his way out. It was reported that Gates said, “every aspect of the defense budget will be reviewed – to include increases in retiree health fees,” and concluded, “There are no sacred cows.”

With Republicans expected to take away Democrat dominance in the US House and possibly the Senate in November, Obama will be forced to show signs of bipartisanship in order to move forward with his agenda. As both domestic and international conditions worsen, with two years remaining before Obama is tested again at the polls, Sen. Lindsey Graham will be his natural choice as Secretary of Defense when Gates steps down next year. In many respects, Sen. Graham has been supportive of President Obama, compared to most other Republicans even in the Senate. Following a recent trip to Afghanistan, Graham told the Greenville News the July 2011 date to begin withdrawing troops from Afghanistan now looks “more reasonable.” It is no coincidence that Graham is becoming more publicly agreeable with Obama as the President’s political situation may dictate a need for Graham to prop up his administration and signal a desire of Obama to reach across the aisle should Democrats lose control of one or both houses of Congress. Furthermore, an appointment to Secretary of Defense would relieve Graham of a battle for the Republican nomination for reelection in 2014 and possibly open the door for a court appointment at the end of the Obama Presidency.

The departure of Graham would create a vacancy in the US Senate that would be temporarily filled by the Governor of South Carolina. This likely scenario makes the election of a Republican Governor two months from now critically important. Should the remnant of Republican voters who are not enthusiastic about the candidacy of Nikki Haley for Governor stay home or vote for another candidate for Governor, they will contribute to the destruction of the Republican Party as a powerful voice for conservative change in South Carolina in the foreseeable future. Their votes will not only contribute to putting Democrats in charge of reapportioning congressional districts after the census that is expected to add one congressional seat to the state but will ensure that the next senator

## Gates Retirement Opens Door for Graham Appointment

from South Carolina will be chosen by supporters and followers of President Obama.

Published: Monday, 30 August 2010 2:40

Hits: 5676

The thought that President Obama would appoint Sen. Graham Secretary of Defense or that Sen. Graham would accept such an appointment is pure speculation, but it could happen. Regardless, the election of a Republican Governor in November is a matter of great importance to the future of South Carolina.