

Mr. President, and Members of the Senate, David demonstrated his commitment to service in so many ways, but his long record of awards speaks for itself. He received the Combat Action Ribbon, the National Defense Service Medal, the War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the War on Terrorism Service Medal, and two Sea Service Deployment Ribbons. David also received the Purple Heart Medal.

David Mendez Ruiz was a young man who exemplified courage under pressure and who always strived to make life a little better for those around him. The Greater Cleveland Christian Academy has set up a scholarship in his memory, so that his legacy can live on through the education of other students. There is no better way to carry on the memory of this brave young American who lost his life while fighting to ensure that we can continue to enjoy freedom and opportunity.

Mr. President, David Mendez Ruiz is a true hero and proved his unwavering allegiance to the United States in the most selfless way—by giving his life in service to our country. My wife, Fran and I continue to keep David's large and wonderful family and his many friends in our thoughts and in our prayers.

Mr. President, I see my colleague on the Senate floor. I have about 10 more minutes.

STAFF SERGEANT KENDALL IVY II

Mr. President, this evening I would like to speak in honor of Marine SSgt Kendall Ivy II, a 28-year-old Ohioan who lost his life on May 11, 2005. He was killed by a roadside bomb while serving our country in Iraq.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Marine SSG Kendall Ivy, II, a 28-year-old Ohioan who lost his life on May 11, 2005. He was killed by a roadside bomb while serving our country in Iraq.

A native of Galion, OH, Kendall was a well-known football and baseball athlete at Galion High School, where he graduated in 1995. He joined the military right after high school, applying these athletic skills of teamwork to the Marine Corps. After the military, Kendall was planning to continue his education and become a history teacher and coach.

Most important to Kendall was his family, consisting of his wife, Lee Ann, sons, Caleb and Harrison, daughter, Reagan, and parents, Raymond and Venita "Kay" Ivy. Additionally, Kendall is survived by three brothers, a sister, and their spouses: Kenneth and Charlotte Ivy, Kathy and Doug Shifley, Kevin and Michelle Ivy, and Keith and Becky Ivy. Lee Ann was 5 months pregnant with their son Gabriel at the time of Kendall's death.

Kendall and Lee Ann first saw each other in middle school. Lee Ann said that after she met him, she spent the greatest 14 years of her life. Kendall and Lee Ann got married young. Kendall once told her, "What if we wait and then die in our late twenties? We

would miss out on so much married life." Indeed, Kendall Ivy was a true family man. He learned of Caleb's birth when he was pulled out of formation on the flight deck of an aircraft carrier. Kendall loved his two boys, but the birth of his daughter changed his life, Lee Ann said. He was very much a family man and was looking forward to coming home and spending time with all of them.

Venita says that her son was "destined to be a Marine." From the age of 3, he wanted to wear the gold eagle, globe, and anchor insignia of the Corps. He made that happen, becoming a staff sergeant while planning a career in the Marines. He served in the United States Marine Corps for 10 years. Venita said her son told her he "wanted to serve this country, that we need to be over there in Iraq so they can be free like we are."

Kevin Ivy also remembers his younger brother's dream of becoming a marine, saying:

He lived life to the fullest. He was kind-hearted. He loved his country. He loved his president. He believed in what he was doing. Each and everyone of these fine young men and women is in a dangerous situation. But my brother understood that, and he was willing to lay down his life for the cause of freeing these people.

Kendall Ivy was loved dearly not only by his family, but also by those who had the privilege to serve with him. Marine CPT Dave Handy wrote the following statement on an Internet tribute site to Kendall:

I was then Staff Sergeant Ivy's platoon commander for a short time and remember him leaving the Marine Corps to seek new adventures. I was ecstatic to hear that such a fine leader of Marines had rejoined the Corps and then brought to tears to hear of his death. I remember him as a ruthless enforcer of standards, a superb example for young Marines, and a patient mentor for all around him. All officers should have been so lucky as to serve with enlisted leaders of Staff Sergeant Ivy's superior caliber. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and I look forward to seeing him again on the streets of heaven. Semper Fidelis.

On the same tribute site, Aric Wells of Nashville, TN, said:

To my friend. To his wife and children. I am deeply sorry. To all who did not have the privilege of knowing Staff Sergeant Ivy, let me tell you that we have lost a great man. A man with morals and convictions that did not waver. A man who would give the shirt off his back to help you out. Staff Sergeant Ivy would go to bat for you when others would turn their backs. He was a damn good man and always a Marine. I will always remember him.

Indeed, Kendall Ivy was deeply loved by all those who knew him. At Camp Ripper, Iraq, a new gym was opened on August 1, 2005, named the "Staff Sergeant Kendall H. Ivy II Memorial Gym." His presence is felt daily by those like SGT Johnny A. Noguera, the gym manager. Sergeant Noguera said:

Everyone wants to make this place as nice as possible, especially for the Marines who knew Staff Sergeant Ivy. When I was growing up in South America, one of my father's friends had a son who was a Marine. He was

so proud of him and he seemed to have this aura around him. That's how Staff Sergeant Ivy was and that's what I wanted to be. I know that many people miss him and they look at this gym as a direct reflection of their love for him. This is why I stress to the guys who work here to keep this place in order so we can properly pay homage to the man who it's named after.

The Marines who attended Kendall's funeral remembered going to the gym with him, then not being able to persuade him to leave. At the end of the workout, Kendall would then ask if his arms looked any bigger. Lee Anna says that her husband "was worse than a woman about his hair and weight."

To end, I would like to quote Sergeant Downing, who wrote a few words about Kendall on the Internet tribute site. He writes:

I served with Staff Sergeant Ivy in Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Marines. Someone once said, 'the best compliment you can give is to say he was a good Marine.' Well, Staff Sergeant Ivy was a damn good Marine!

Kendall Ivy epitomized not only the meaning of a good Marine, but also of the ideal son, husband, and father. My wife Fran and I continue to keep the family and friends of SSG Kendall Ivy in our thoughts and prayers.

I yield the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THUNE). The Senator from Illinois.

IRAQ

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me start by acknowledging my gratitude and respect for the Senator from Ohio for coming to the floor of the Senate at this late hour and telling these touching stories about these men and women who have served our Nation so well and have given their lives in service to our values and this great cause of making America safe. As of today, 2,524 of those stories could be told. That is the number of American service men and women who have died in Iraq as of today.

It is a day of special significance in my State of Illinois. We have reached the number of 100, 100 brave men and women from the land of Lincoln who have given their lives in service to our country, 100 Illinois families who have lost a loved one, a child, a parent, a spouse, a brother, a sister.

Abraham Lincoln, in the midst of the Civil War, consumed with grief over all of the death, said of those who died that they gave "the last full measure of devotion." It is a reminder to all of us that when we discuss policy in the Senate, it does not always have a direct impact on the lives of those we represent. But when we vote on foreign policy, on the issue of war, we are making decisions that cost lives. We should never forget that. That is why this is more than just another job or another profession. This is, indeed, an awesome responsibility.

Last week we completed the debate on where we will go in Iraq. It was not

conclusive. Two amendments were offered and neither were adopted. Basically, the Senate took no position, at least the majority of the Senate took no position as the debate came to a close. But it was interesting, the tone and tenor of that debate. How many times on the floor of the Senate did we hear from the other side of the aisle the phrase "cut and run"? It was part of a recurring mantra. I don't know how genuine it was—I assume it was—or if it was generated by a focus group as just the right combination of words to criticize those who would suggest we need a different approach and a different plan in Iraq. But after all of the chest thumping and the "bring them on" rhetoric, the sad reality is that our debate ended and the war continues.

But then something very interesting happened. After we had considered an amendment offered by Senator CARL LEVIN and Senator JACK REED which suggested that we should start withdrawing troops this year, moving toward a timetable, a day when our troops would come home, after that amendment was defeated on basically a partisan rollcall—there might have been one Republican joining us, but basically it was a partisan rollcall—after that amendment had been criticized as a cut-and-run, retreat amendment, something interesting occurred: The top U.S. commander in Iraq, General Casey, announced shortly after the Levin-Reed amendment was defeated that, in fact, we would redeploy as many as five to six U.S. combat brigades by the end of this next year and that he plans to begin drawing down forces in just a few weeks.

General Casey is offering a plan that in many ways looks very similar to the Democratic proposals. Yet when we proposed initiating redeployment this year, the Republican majority accused us of cutting and running from our responsibilities in Iraq. General Casey's plan does not call for total withdrawal, neither did the Democratic alternatives. Senators LEVIN and REED wanted to begin redeployment this year and continue without a specific time line for completion but clearly putting the burden on the Iraqis to defend themselves.

I also supported the Kerry-Feingold amendment calling for redeployment of the bulk of U.S. forces by July of next year, 12 months away. Some said 12 months is too soon; 12 months is not enough time.

What has happened in the last 12 months in Iraq? In the last 12 months we have lost 762 soldiers. We have seen more than 2,000 come home with serious injuries. We have spent nearly \$90 billion. It isn't just 12 months on the calendar. It is 12 months of living and dying and being injured and asking the American people to continue to sacrifice for that war effort. So 12 months is an important and significant period of time.

The amendment by Senators KERRY and FEINGOLD called for the continued

presence of forces, if needed, beyond July of 2007, for training, counterterrorism, and to protect U.S. personnel, along with a substantial U.S. military presence still in the region. They also suggested we consult with the Iraqi Government about the future of our troops.

It is interesting that these amendments and General Casey's plan share several themes. First, we need a timeline for redeploying U.S. forces.

Second, redeployment does not mean total withdrawal.

Third, the shared objective of all plans is accelerating and expanding the handover of leadership to the Iraqis themselves.

So many people criticized the Democrats at the end of last week that we didn't take a position. It turns out the position we took in both amendments was consistent by and large with the proposal of General Casey.

I believe this is less about setting deadlines than about establishing timelines. We need to move toward a trajectory, a course of successfully handing over the security of Iraq to the people of Iraq. We have given them so much.

This is the fourth year of this war. By the end of this calendar year, it will have lasted longer than the Korean war and, a few months beyond that, longer than World War II. We have given a lot: Over \$300 billion; over 2,500 American lives; 18,000 seriously injured soldiers; 2,000 returning with head injuries that they will have to cope with for the rest of their lives. This is the reality of war, and this is the contribution given by the American people to the nation of Iraq to give them a chance to depose a dictator, to allow free elections, to allow them to debate and create a new government.

But in the end, we can't do it all, and we shouldn't do it all. There has to be a will within the Iraqi people to stand up and defend themselves. They have to understand that if their nation is worth having, it is worth fighting for. They have to resolve their internal difficulties, and they have to stand together to fight off any potential enemies who would invade them in the future. That is the reality of real governance and real responsibility. That is why many of us believe that this debate ended last week without a conclusion. The message was not sent to the Iraqi people to accept the responsibility for their fate. But General Casey's proposal at least moves in that direction. I am glad those of us who voted last week for both the Kerry-Feingold amendment and the Levin-Reed amendment are in concert with General Casey in the belief that this must come to an end and soon.

Then over the weekend something extraordinary happened. New Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki proposed a plan to try and unite Iraq's ethnic and sectarian factions. He knows the violence has taken a terrible toll. Last week the Los Angeles Times released a study

that said more than 50,000 innocent Iraqis have died a violent death in the last 3 years. The article suggested that maybe there were many more.

The statistics came from the Baghdad morgue, the Iraqi Health Ministry, and other sources. But for a variety of reasons, the death toll is probably undercounted. Iraqis have died in uniform, killed by insurgents. Others have died waiting in line at a market. Still more have died along roadsides and in terrible, desperate places in the dark of night where they have been taken in by militias and murdered. The majority of bodies at the morgue are those of civilians, and the vast majority have been shot gangland-execution style. Many have been savagely tortured.

In many cases, the cities of Iraq have been the battleground in struggles between the U.S. and Iraqi Government forces against the insurgents and foreign terrorists and among Iraqis themselves. Civilians have been caught in the crossfire, innocent people whose lives are in danger and extinguished in the crossfire of this insurgency.

Recently a group of my constituents came to visit me. They knew of people living in Ramadi, and they know there is an effort under way to try to calm that area and to remove the insurgency. The people who came to see me in Springfield, IL are very concerned about the plight of innocent people who were stuck in the middle of this crossfire. Ramadi is the largest predominantly Sunni city in Iraq. It is the capital of Anbar Province, one corner of the Sunni Triangle. Over 900 American service men and women have been killed in that province. A corporal with the First Armored Division was killed there on Monday.

Anbar has seen far too many deaths. U.S. and Iraqi forces are moving neighborhood by neighborhood trying to take control of the city. Many civilians have fled but an unknown number remain.

Newspaper accounts describe "a post-apocalyptic world: row after row of buildings shot up, boarded up, caved in, tumbled down." Our generals have repeatedly stated that there will not be another frontal Fallujah-style assault of Ramadi. Our forces have encircled the city and are trying to retake it one neighborhood at a time. The goal is for Iraqi forces to remain in the city, to allow it to return to some kind of normal economic life, and to keep the insurgents from simply retaking the neighborhoods.

Those are worthy goals, and it is critical to their success that the civilians of Ramadi feel that they can stay and be safe in their city. Ultimately, it is the Iraqi people and their leaders, their armed forces and police, who will have to end this cycle of violence.

Prime Minister al-Maliki is trying to find a way out. In looking at the terrible waves of death in Iraq, though, it is the deaths of over 2,500 American service men and women that touch my heart.

As the Prime Minister searches for a way to end the insurgency, we have to make it clear that his plans for reconciliation cannot rest on the foundation of amnesty for those who killed our brave soldiers.

In his plan, the Prime Minister stated there might be amnesty for insurgents "not proved to be involved in crimes, terrorist activities, and war crimes against humanity."

Now, the President has to make it clear to the Iraqi Government that they cannot erase the killing of Americans as they try to sketch out this reconciliation plan.

I asked on a weekend show—when I was on one of the Sunday morning shows—what would you think of a plan that said if you killed an American soldier, you could be given amnesty? It would trouble me greatly, when I think of those soldiers of ours who have died for the people of Iraq. It would trouble me as much, if not more, if I had a son or daughter in uniform over there, realizing that they basically announced that it is excusable to shoot and kill an American soldier. We cannot allow that to happen.

The Iraqi Government faces a difficult road ahead. We have to continue to help them. We need to also step up the effort to make the Iraqis responsible for their own future. Some have said we must stay and finish the job, but the simple fact is it is not our job to finish. It is for the Iraqis to finish the job.

The Senate overwhelmingly called for 2006 to be a year of transition in Iraq. That transition must be to Iraqi leadership and responsibility. That is how we can truly announce that our mission is accomplished.

HIGHER EDUCATION ACT EXTENSION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, most Members of Congress come to this life experience with previous life experiences. Many times, they are motivated by something that they have lived through or witnessed. I have seen it time and time again, whether we are talking about a commitment to help certain people, such as the disabled, or to cure a certain disease, whether it is mental illness or cancer or heart disease; you find that many of our colleagues in the Senate and the House really rise to the occasion and show great devotion and commitment to these issues because they have seen them, they understand them.

Well, we all come here with many life experiences. The one that I had as a young man was repeated many times over. After growing up in East St. Louis, IL, and going for a year to a good university, St. Louis University, I decided I had to go out of my home, go away to school. That is what college was all about. I went home to my mom who was a widow at the time, and told her of my plan.

She said: How could you afford it?

I said: Don't worry, I have it all under control.

Well, Mr. President, I was making it up. I had no idea how I was going to pay for it. I went to school here in Washington, at Georgetown University, and worked hard during the school year and the summer and saved up money to help pay expenses, and I also took out student loans.

Were it not for the National Defense Education Act, I could never have finished college and law school. I didn't have any wealth, my family didn't either, so I had to borrow the money. It was early in the 1960s and this program had just gotten started. There were kids all over America like myself who used those student loans to make it through college and professional school. I remember my wife and I were married when I was still in law school, and when I graduated they accumulated all of the student loans that I had borrowed in my entire college career and sent me this ominous letter to tell me that a year after graduation I had to start paying it back, one-tenth of all those loans plus 3 percent every year, without fail. I opened that envelope with great trepidation and saw that total amount and didn't know how I could possibly do it. I told my new wife, holding our new baby, that we faced a student loan debt that needed to be paid off over 10 years, and that debt was \$6,500.

Every time I tell that story to college students now, they break out laughing at hearing \$6,500. Now many of them have to borrow that for a semester. Many years ago, it seemed like a daunting task. Luckily, we met the challenge and paid off the loan. I have been watching student loans ever since because I understand for many students today they are still the ticket to an education.

Last Friday, the Higher Education Act was extended for the fourth time since last year.

I hope that by extending it 3 more months we will be able to work on meaningful legislation that will make it easier for students and parents to pay for a college education.

Earlier this year, Members on the Republican side of the aisle passed a so-called deficit reduction bill that cut \$12 billion from student aid—the largest single cut in financial aid programs in the history of the country.

Although most of the \$12 billion came from reducing the maximum yield private lenders could earn on loans, it also came from raising the interest rates on many of the loans parents take out for their kids' education.

Right now, students are scrambling to consolidate their loans in order to lock in a low interest rate. Do you know why? July 1 is the deadline. Beginning then, students who are still in school will no longer be able to consolidate their loans at lower interest rates because of changes made in the deficit reduction bill. The low interest rates, incidentally, will be gone.

We had an opportunity, with that change, to make a real investment in our children's future. Knowing that interest rates on student loans were about to jump from 5.3 percent to 6.8 percent for students, and from 6.1 percent to 8.5 percent for most parent borrowers, we could have made a real impact and taken the savings from the Deficit Reduction Act on student loans—\$12 billion—and helped the students and their parents. Would that not have been a wise investment in our future? If we are not going to help students finish their college education to become the leaders of tomorrow, are we really preparing for our future?

Sadly, the Republican majority took the \$12 billion in savings from the college student loan program—money taken out of the program—and instead of giving it back to the students to help them get through school, they put the money in a fund to help pay for tax cuts for the wealthiest people in America. That is the most upside down logic in the world—to turn our backs on our young people who are struggling to pay off student loans for education and to say instead that the multimillionaires will receive a more generous tax break. That is what the leadership in Congress believes to be the highest priority. Not many families in America agree.

The smart, hard-working students deserve a chance to get some help. But the Republican majority let them down.

In April, I introduced a bill called the Reverse the Raid on Student Aid Act of 2006, to change that. The bill would increase the Pell grant and turn it into a mandatory spending program, with automatic annual increases; cut student and parent loan interest rates by 50 percent; and allow students to consolidate their loans while they are still in school. It would take the money given to the wealthiest in tax cuts and give it back to the students, to make college more affordable and to make the debts they face after graduation more manageable.

The maximum Pell grant award has been frozen at \$4,050 for 4 years. The President, once again this year, proposed keeping the award at the same level, \$4,050, even though the total cost for tuition, fees, room and board at 4-year public universities has increased by 44 percent since President George W. Bush came to office. As the cost of college education has increased 44 percent, he has frozen the grants—Pell grants—for those kids from struggling families who are trying to get a college education, which means they either postpone their education, give up on their education, or borrow more money in student loans. Is that any gift to America? Is that looking forward?

Twenty years ago, the maximum Pell grant for low-income and working families covered about half—55 percent—of the average cost of attending a 4-year public college. Today, it is down to 33 percent. That is more and more debt on students and their families.