from one of combat to one of training, equipping, advising and providing support for security and military forces in Iraq and to support counterterrorism operations in the country of Iraq. So we do a mission change with this legislation.

Next, also the statement of law, we call for the strengthening of the U.S. military. I think there is a broad, bipartisan consensus that what has happened in the war in Iraq and in Afghanistan is that our military has been strained. Our military has been strained because of the humongous effort that has gone into prosecuting the war in those two places over the last 5½ years. So we, in our legislation, follow the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, requiring the strengthening of the U.S. military.

Third, a statement of policy with respect to the police and criminal justice system in Iraq. On several of the codels I have taken to Iraq, one of the things that is absolutely phenomenal to me is that there is not a criminal justice system that today is working in Iraq. So the bad guys, when they are caught—what ends up happening to them? Are they prosecuted in the way that we would prosecute bad guys here in the United States of America? Is there a system of courts that is up and functioning? The police system, especially the national police in Iraq, is dysfunctional. It is infiltrated by members of the militias. Those are some of the findings of the GAO, as well as some of the findings in General Jones' recent report. So one of the things we require as a statement of policy is that the police and criminal justice system in Iraq be transformed.

Also in our legislation we required the statement of policy on the oil sector in Iraq. We know the Iraqis need to come up with a reformation of their law and with changes to their law that will require the equitable distribution of the oil resources in Iraq.

There are other measures here that are set forth in the legislation. One that I will refer to briefly has to do with conditions and the support of the United States in Iraq. This is section 11 of our legislation. In section 11 of our legislation we say: It shall be the policy of the United States to condition continued U.S. political, military and economic support for Iraq upon the demonstration by the Government of Iraq of sufficient political will and the making of substantial progress toward achieving the milestones that are described in that legislation. So the conditioning of the U.S. support for Iraq is based on them taking on the responsibility for achieving the milestones that were set forth in the Iraq Study Group's recommendation.

Those are major changes. I believe this legislation—although there is other legislation here that I have supported, including legislation that called for timelines with respect to the reduction of troops—this legislation also is very good and very substantive legislation.

Let me essentially sum up what this legislation would have done. The first thing it would have done is call for the mission change. I think more and more I hear a chorus rising in the Senate, in many of the pieces of legislation that we have seen, that it is time for us to change the mission from one of combat to one of assistance; from one of combat, where we are policing a sectarian civil war today, to one of training and equipping and counterterrorism within Iraq. That change of mission is something we ought to be able to accomplish in the Senate.

Second, the diplomatic surge. We know without the diplomatic surge we are not going to be able to succeed in Iraq. We know we need to have the neighborhood, the region, much more involved in trying to bring about stability in Iraq.

Third, the conditioning of the U.S. support on progress and on the milestones set forth there.

I think, regarding these broad agreements, we need to keep pressuring the Iraqis to move forward to adopt those, not only to adopt, implement the milestones and benchmarks they themselves came up with.

Let me conclude by saying this debate is not yet over. There are still groups, numbers of Senators, who are trying to figure out whether we can bring enough of a bipartisan way forward that will help us change the mission in Iraq. I look forward to working with both my Democratic and Republican colleagues, seeing whether we can in fact achieve that end.

At the end of the day, there is a lot at stake in this issue for all of us in America. When one thinks, first of all, about the fact that we are approaching 4,000 of our best, our bravest men and women who have died in this war in Iraq, and we know as a fact we have 30,000 American men and women in uniform who have been grievously injured in that nation; we know the fiscal consequence of this war is now $750 billion and rising—expectations now are that the war costs will be at $1 trillion—we as a Senate and Congress have a responsibility, in my view, to address this issue.

I hope, in the days ahead, as we address the Defense appropriations legislation, as well as the supplemental which the President has requested—additional money for the ongoing effort, the so-called bridge funding—that we can revisit this issue and see whether we can come together to try to forge a new way forward in Iraq.

I yield the floor.

AMERICA'S NORTHERN BORDER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I rise today to shed light on a serious national security vulnerability facing our Nation, a dangerous gap in the United States-Canadian border. For the past 2 weeks, we have been debating the Department of Defense authorization bill, a bill that authorizes many of the programs that keep us safe from foreign terrorists on foreign soil.

What we have not been focused on in these 2 weeks is the threat that comes when people cross our own borders without inspection. In fact, I would argue we haven't been focusing on this problem enough this year. We haven't taken the steps necessary to keep our borders, particularly the northern border, safe.

That is simply unacceptable. It is no secret that today our immigration system is in shambles. To say our borders are not secure is an incredible understatement. Although most of my Republican colleagues would agree with me, they have failed to take comprehensive action. So our borders remain unsafe and insecure.

Securing our borders is a catchy political phrase, a sound bite guaranteed to get on the evening news. And 99 percent of the time, it is used in reference to our southern borders. Stories run with pictures of immigrants crossing the United States-Mexico border as politicians lament about the dangers these immigrants pose, those who would be gardeners, nannies, busboys, and maids.

It is as if no one remembers that this country has a northern border as well, a porous border that represents just as many problems and dangers. Today, I hope that will change. The Government Accountability Office has released a report detailing the vulnerabilities of our northern border, and people are starting to pay attention. MSNBC is even showing images of people carrying bags and boxes across the border without any inspection whatsoever.

I hope my colleagues are as attentive as the media is on this issue. Let me take a moment to read some of the Government Accountability Office's report.

It said:

> Our visits [referring to the GAO's investigations of the Northern border] show that Customs and Border Protection faces significant challenges in effectively monitoring the border and preventing undetected entry into the United States. Our work shows that a determined cross-border violator would likely be able to bring radioactive materials or other contraband undetected into the United States by crossing the United States-Canadian border at any of the locations we investigated.

Think about that for a moment. The Government Accountability Office is saying that terrorists are currently able to smuggle radiological, biological, or chemical weapons into our country without much difficulty. If this were to happen, our worst nightmare scenario would become a reality.

Millions could be killed from a single barbaric act. Right now, this very day, such an action is possible because of our lack of border security, our lack of northern border security.

Now, this report may be a recent release, but the vulnerabilities it revealed are old news. In July, during the

debate over the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill, Senator SALAZAR and I introduced an amendment that was approved, compelling the President and the Secretary of Homeland Security to improve security at our northern border until they are able to certify that they have 100 percent operational control of the border.

We introduced this amendment because the Bush administration was not living up to the requirements of existing law. The law requires, requires—does not suggest, does not allow, it requires—that 20 percent of all new border agents be sent to the northern border. But the administration has flaunted that requirement. In fact, only 965 agents out of a total of 13,488 agents are stationed in the North—only 7 percent. And that is after the number of agents actually decreased by nearly 9 percent from fiscal year 2005 to 2006.

Such numbers are ludicrous when you consider that our northern border spans over 5,525 miles and is almost three times as large as the 1,993-mile southern border; almost three times as large, yet it is allocated an infinitesimal amount of our overall border security.

Some of my Republican colleagues will argue that the risk of terrorism is much greater from our border with Mexico than our border with Canada. But they would be flat wrong. History has proven that today. Let me recite some of it.

Over the last several years, nearly 69,000 individuals have been apprehended crossing the northern border. That is the tip of the iceberg as countless others have crossed the border illegally without apprehension because, notwithstanding the law, the administration has only got a handful of people up on the border that is almost three times as long as the southern border.

So we have no idea what the magnitude of this vulnerability is or what consequences will result from the administration's dereliction of duty. We know terrorists seek to exploit vulnerabilities. I created the first task force on homeland security when I was in the House of Representatives. I sat on the select committee that created the Department of Homeland Security. I was the chief Democratic negotiator for the first element of the 9/11 bill. I have spent a lot of time on this issue. The one thing we can be assured of is that terrorists don't continuously operate in the same way. They study, and seek to exploit, vulnerabilities. We know they study how our Nation works and where the holes in our security are. We can be sure they will seek out the easiest path of entry to the United States, and right now that path is through the northern border where it can be easy to avoid the mere 965 agents scattered along more than 5,500 miles.

Those agents are not all on duty at one time. They go through a rotational system. They have 8-hour shifts. That means only a third of those people are covering the northern border at any given time of day.

I remind my colleagues that in 1999, Ahmed Ressam, the millennium bomber, because he came at the time we were ready to turn to the year 2000, snuck in through the northern border to kill as many American citizens in cold blood as possible. Although we were able to stop Ahmed Ressam from carrying out his deadly plans, we do not appear to have learned any lessons from this near catastrophe. That incident should have been a wake-up call illustrating the vulnerabilities of our northern border and the dire need to remedy them. But instead we remain complacent, focusing the Senate and the Nation on a more politically attractive issue, our southern border. If I am a terrorist seeking to commit an act against the United States, I am going to go to the course of least resistance. If I have nearly 12,500 border agents at one border and 900 some odd in another border, what are my chances? Where am I better off, especially when that border is three times the size of the southern border? Where am I better off to try to cross to the United States and do harm?

We must never order our security priorities based on the political winds of the time. We must examine the evidence and analyze the risks and implement the strongest, most appropriate national defense strategy that ignores the unfounded, often bigoted fears that currently influence the debate. If you are concerned about terrorists, as we all should be, you should be concerned about the state of both of our borders.

I urge my colleagues to join with us in pressuring the administration to take its border security responsibilities more seriously and to send our resources out where we need them. Trying to secure our Nation by focusing on only one of two borders is a recipe for disaster. You either protect the entire country or you have protected none of it.

If my Republican colleagues do not join us soon to secure our northern border, then I question their motives in past debates on immigration. I wonder whether they are more concerned about the ethnicity of immigrants crossing the border than the threats they present. I hope this newly released GAO report will be a call to action for my colleagues from both sides of the aisle. I hope they will support efforts to secure our northern border and make our Nation more secure. This is too important an issue to allow partisan politics to play a role.

I will continue to fight to secure the northern border, the southern border, and all other points of entry, including those by water and by aviation. I hope my colleagues will join me. The Nation cannot afford anything less.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UKRAINE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Mr. LUGAR. Madam President, on September 30, the people of Ukraine will return to the ballot box to vote in critical parliamentary elections. I rise today to express my hope that Ukraine preserves and extends the tremendous accomplishments they have achieved in establishing a stable and representative government.

I was privileged to represent our country as President Bush's personal representative for the November 21, 2004, presidential runoff election in Ukraine. I was not an advocate of either candidate in the election. My focus was to stress free and fair election procedures that would strengthen worldwide respect for the legitimacy of the winning candidate.

The 2004 campaign for president in Ukraine had been marked by widespread political intimidation and failure to give equal coverage to candidates in the media. Physical intimidation of voters and illegal use of governmental administrative and legal authorities had been evident and persistent.

Unfortunately the situation worsened on the day of the runoff election. The government of then-President Kuchma allowed, or aided and abetted, wholesale fraud and abuse that changed the results of the election. It was clear that Prime Minister Yanukovich, a position that he again holds today, did not win the 2004 election despite erroneous election announcements and calls of congratulations from Moscow.

I joined thousands of election observers who were sent by the United States and European states through organizations such as the National Endowment for Democracy, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations. Most importantly, more than 10,000 Ukrainian citizens were organized by the Committee of Voters of Ukraine to carefully observe individual polling stations. These observers outlined an extensive list of serious procedural violations.

Even in the face of these attempts to end any hope of a free and fair election, I was inspired by the courage of so many citizens of Ukraine demonstrating their passion for free expression and for a truly democratic Ukraine. As corrupt authorities tried to disrupt, frighten, and intimidate citizens, brave Ukrainians pushed back by continuing to do their best to keep the election on track and to prevent chaos.

The day after the runoff election, I told the international and local press and the people of Ukraine through a