

We have seen now what has happened in the change, in the increase in productivity. Still, the minimum wage goes down.

Mr. President, my excellent staff found that chart I was referring to—“Growing Together, 1947 to 1973.” The lowest quintile, the second, third, right up to the very top—if you look at the different colors, you will see that all America moved along together. Now look what has happened. Corporations get a \$276 billion tax break, small business a \$36 billion tax break, and no increase in the minimum wage.

I hope somewhere during the course of this debate, our Republican friends will come out and make at least some argument about either the economics—it is an impossible one to make. You can't say it is the loss of jobs. We have dealt with that issue.

They will say you can't increase the minimum wage because it is inflationary in our economy. We show it is less than one-fifth of 1 percent of total wages paid over the course of the year. That argument doesn't work.

They will try to say it is not what our country is about, we can't afford that in the richest country in the world, where people are working. We demonstrate that the States which have an increase in minimum wage have grown faster and grown stronger and have a better economic record. And most important, child poverty has gone down.

I imagine, over the period of this year, we will hear 100 speeches in the different parts of our country about our children being our future. We have an opportunity today at noontime to do something about that. You don't have to make a speech, you have to vote right. You can vote today and, with that vote, hopefully, expedited process, that we can wind this legislation up and work out the differences with the House of Representatives and get it to the President to sign. Six million children will benefit.

So if you are talking about your concerns about middle class, if you are talking about working families, if you are talking about fairness and decency, if you are talking about children's issues, women's issues, civil rights issues, today at noon you have a chance to do something about it.

So I hope we will have more of an opportunity as we get closer to the time to add some additional comments. But I would hope that finally this basic, fundamental, and I think irrational, irresponsible, unacceptable, postured position our Republican friends have in terms of opposition—continued opposition, opposition, opposition—to the minimum wage would end. Today we are on the seventh day, but we debated this 16 other days to try to get an increase in the minimum wage without the Republicans letting us have it. How many days? What is the price? We don't even know what the price is. What are we supposed to do—keep bidding it out and sweetening the pot

until the Republicans come along? Is that what the Americans want us to do? That is not what we are prepared to do.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I assume we are proceeding as in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

Mr. BOND. I thank the Chair. I would just say that like many Members on my side of the aisle, we pushed for a minimum wage bill last fall. Regrettably, it was filibustered, so we couldn't bring it to a vote. We are looking for and I intend to support a minimum wage bill if it has some reasonable tax incentives for small businesses that would be seriously harmed in some instances by the cost of a very drastic rise in the minimum wage. But I am hoping we will be allowed and not be prevented from adding those tax breaks that I think everybody needs.

IRAQ AND RELATED ISSUES

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about Iraq and Iraq-related issues. I had the opportunity this past weekend and the previous weekend to spend a good deal of time with the Missouri National Guard men and women in Missouri who do a great job in providing civil response to tremendous problems, whether it is floods or tornadoes or, in some instances, an ice storm that was devastating. Many of them have been to Iraq and Afghanistan and are going back, and they are proud of what they do. They know they are doing the job the military was assigned to do, and they are proud of it and we should support them.

Mr. President, it is noteworthy that I mention again my colleague and National Guard Caucus Cochair Senator PAT LEAHY and I will reintroduce the National Defense Enhancement and National Guard Empowerment Act later today.

This comprehensive legislation recognizes the paramount contributions that our citizen soldiers and airmen have made not only in Iraq and Afghanistan, but all over the globe and particularly here at home.

The bill provides four central planks: the elevation of the Guard chief to the rank of general, a seat for the chief of the Guard Bureau on the Joint Chiefs of Staff; mandates that the Deputy NorthCom position be for an eligible National Guard officer; and it allows for the National Guard Bureau to identify and validate equipment requirements, particularly those unique to the Guard's homeland missions.

When we went after the terrorists in Afghanistan, the Guard was there. When we needed to establish order and stability in Iraq, the Guard was there. When Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the Gulf Coast, the Guard was

there. When a natural or man-made disaster strikes, the Governors call on the Guard, and the Guard is there. The next time America needs military forces overseas, the Guard will be there.

Unfortunately, when the Pentagon makes key decisions that impact the Guard, the Guard is still not there.

The need to empower the National Guard is not only still there but grows each day. We need to give the Guard more bureaucratic muscle, so that the force will not be continually pushed around in policy and budget debates within the Pentagon.

Time and time again, the National Guard has had to rely on the Congress, not its total force partners in the active duty, to provide and equip fully the resources it needs to fulfill its missions.

Our legislation will end this nonsense. We will put the National Guard on an equal footing with other decision makers responsible for national security and the transformation of the military forces.

As GEN Steve Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau put it, they need to be “in the huddle” at the Pentagon if they are to be in the game. This will ensure that the next time the 430,000 National Guard citizen-soldiers and airmen of the Guard are discussed at the senior levels of the Pentagon, the Guard will be there.

Additionally, I remind my colleagues that the Fiscal Year 2007 Military Construction and Quality of Life Appropriations bill was not passed into law. As a result, approximately \$17 billion in new construction and BRAC projects authorized by the Congress in 2007 cannot proceed.

The military service chiefs have urged the Congress to pass this legislation.

The projects funded by the Fiscal Year 2007 MILCON bill are necessary to sustain readiness and quality of life for U.S. service personnel. I also ask that letter from the Navy and Army Secretaries and Service Chiefs that raise concern about the risk by operating under a continuing resolution be printed in the RECORD.

I ask unanimous consent that letters in support of this legislation be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS,

Washington, DC, December 22, 2006.

Hon. TRENT LOTT,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR LOTT: We are seeking your assistance in lessening the severe burden placed on the Department of the Navy in the absence of a Military Construction, Quality of Life, and Veterans Affairs FY 2007 Appropriations bill, and to offer our continued support for expeditious passage of this important legislation.

Although the Continuing Resolution (CR) has provided some initial relief, a CR in its

current form of all of FY 2007 could severely impact Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) and Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 05 accounts because funding has thus far been limited to the smaller programs requested and enacted in FY 2006 as compared to the larger programs requested in FY 2007. It poses particularly acute problems in the Family Housing Construction, Navy; Military Construction, Navy; and Military Construction Naval Reserve accounts because of the restriction on the award of "new starts."

BAH provides Sailors and Marines monthly cash payments for their housing costs. Facilities, Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization funds provide an immediate and visible improvement to quality of life in the workplace. Both of these accounts were moved from the Defense Bill to the Military Construction, Quality of Life, and Veterans Affairs for FY-07. It is important that the appropriations be made in the traditional accounts with normal flexibilities. If we are to manage under provisional levels for the full year, the Department must be able to address execution issues that inevitably will arise in these programs.

The CR is precluding our ability to provide modern, government owned or privatized quality housing to our Sailors, Marines and their families at a time when the Global War on Terror is placing enormous stress on our military and military families. The Department would be unable to complete a long standing Department of Defense goal to oblige funds needed to eliminate all inadequate housing by 2007. Specifically, we would have to postpone construction of 250 new homes at Naval Base Guam, and Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow CA. We would also have to postpone housing privatization projects on over 8,000 homes at Navy and Marine Corps installations in California, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas.

If we are providing funding for "new starts," we can also improve operational readiness with modernized facilities, reduce national security threats at our nuclear weapons facilities, and provide new training capabilities for our men and women in uniform. Without funding, the Department would be unable to award 44 "new start" military construction projects in 11 states and four overseas locations totaling \$857 million. One example is the award of two \$13 million military construction projects for Mobile User Objective System (MUOS) ground control and tracking stations—one in Hawaii and another in Sigonella, Italy. MUOS is a \$6.5 billion narrowband UHF satellite communications capability vital to our joint war fighters. There are operational concerns as existing satellite communication systems are failing as they reach the end of their service life. Without these ground stations, planned launches of the MUOS satellites already funded will be delayed, and the Department faces additional costs for spacecraft and ground equipment storage, contractual and additional fees, and other related costs far greater than the cost of the construction.

With respect to BRAC 05, the CR can stymie our efforts to construct facilities and move equipment and people to receiver locations, and impede our ability to harvest savings and organizational efficiencies already accounted for in the budget. Delaying installation closures jeopardizes our ability to proceed with the many joint recommendations that require complex, sequential moves, all of which by statute must be accomplished by September 2011. The Department of the Navy's share of the Department of Defense BRAC account in FY 2007 is \$690 million, compared to the FY 2006 enacted amount of

\$247 million. While the Office of Management and Budget has ruled that "new starts," including BRAC construction, is not a concern in the BRAC 05 account, the current CR is limiting FY 2007 expenditures to the FY 2006 level. We will have to delay an estimated \$382 million of BRAC construction and \$61 million in civilian personnel moves, reductions, and hiring actions, primarily for BRAC actions in New Orleans, LA and southern California, until funding becomes available.

Prompt passage of an FY 2007 Military Construction, Quality of Life, and Veterans Affairs appropriations bill would resolve these difficulties. The appropriations bills endorsed by the full House and Senate differed little from the President's budget request for the Department of the Navy. Should an FY 2007 bill prove unattainable, we would ask that you expand the authority in the CR to allow funding to the lower of the FY 2007 House and Senate appropriation bills, and allow for "new starts" in military construction and family housing accounts, subject as always to requirements of the Authorization Act.

We appreciate your continued support for our country's Sailors, Marines and their families. We stand ready to respond to any questions or concerns that you may have.

Sincerely,

JAMES T. CONWAY,
General, U.S. Marine
Corps.

MICHAEL G. MULLEN,
Admiral, U.S. Navy.
DONALD C. WINTER,
Secretary of the Navy.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY,
Washington, DC, December 18, 2006.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCONNELL: Over the past several years, the Army has executed an aggressive and carefully integrated plan in support of our national security mission. Our plan provides for simultaneous organizing, manning, training, equipping, deploying and redeploying of units and Soldiers, as well as the required materiel. It also lays the foundation for retaining our position as the world's dominant land force, to include base consolidation, restationing of troops, and improvements essential to providing our Soldiers and their families the standard of living they deserve.

Military construction and quality of life initiatives constitute large, crucial portions of this carefully synchronized plan. Yet, the limitations imposed by the Continuing Resolution (CR) are already causing our plan to fray, and it is likely to unravel completely should we go through the entire fiscal year under a CR. The potential negative effects on operational readiness cannot be overemphasized; the Army's ability to prosecute the Global War On Terrorism and to prepare for future conflicts would be severely hampered.

As an example, the Army's FY 2007 Military Construction Plan includes almost \$400 million to support the Army Modular Force through construction of a battle command training center, vehicle maintenance facility, several brigade complex facilities, barracks and numerous child development centers. Our force rotation plan to Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as our overall readiness posture, relies on completing these conversions to the Army Modular Force on time. We have recruited and retained the Soldiers, purchased individual force protection equipment, repaired and replaced weapons, and established a training plan, but now we are faced with the real possibility of not having facilities ready for training, maintenance,

communications and command activities. We will have Soldiers at Fort Campbell, Fort Drum, and Fort Stewart who are ready to fight, ready to lead and ready to defend this country, but won't have adequate places to train, work or sleep.

We will see similar situations in the Reserve Component. The Army National Guard will be without aviation support facilities, field maintenance shops and supply points. The Army Reserve will lack several reserve centers, training facilities and storage facilities. We will put at risk funding or land provided by the states for many of these projects. Citizens eager to serve this country will find a lack of updated facilities.

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) initiatives are quickly coming apart at the seams, as the Army will be limited to spending less than one-fourth of the amount needed to keep approved BRAC moves on schedule. Imbedded in BRAC is the movement of units from overseas back to the United States. Delaying BRAC means we won't meet our the 1st Armored Division from Germany to Fort Bliss and may hinder the establishment of two critically needed modular brigade combat teams. For every brigade combat team affected by these delays, thousands of Soldiers will lack facilities to train and work or, at best, will have only inadequate and outdated facilities.

In summary, the Army will experience unacceptable delays in constructing much needed facilities unless the Congress can pass a full Military Construction/Quality of Life Bill for FY 2007 by February or expand and enhance the next Continuing Resolution to permit the execution of all programs and projects requested in the FY 2007 President's Budget.

The Army's leadership is prepared to answer any questions you may have. We deeply appreciate your support of our men and women in uniform.

Sincerely,

PETER J. SCHOOMAKER,
General, United States Army,
Chief of Staff.

FRANCIS J. HARVEY,
Secretary of the Army.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, one of the big questions that is being discussed today is what the President's plans are in Iraq and whether we should submit a resolution condemning the troop increases. I find it passing strange that many of the people pushing for a resolution to say we shouldn't send troops just adopted by a unanimous vote the confirmation of General Petraeus, who has said he believes he can do the job if he has the additional troops. He says the number is 21,000. Who are we to second-guess an experienced general who knows what the needs of his men and women in service are?

I have listened to many of the persuasive arguments on the other side about their concerns about the Iraq war. There are some who want to cut off completely our involvement—cut and run. They have an argument; they make a legitimate point. I hope we have a chance to vote on it because the intelligence community leaders from DNI to the military intelligence head to the CIA said cutting and running now would be a disaster resulting in chaos, in additional killing of Iraqi citizens, and giving the entire area over to al-Qaeda and probably bringing in a region-wide conflict. So that is at

least a position that I understand how they take it, but I will fight very hard against it.

What I don't understand is the people who say they want to do several things: They want to see a change in policy in Iraq. They want to see more Iraqi responsibility. They want to change the rules of engagement so we can go after Shia death squads and there won't be any political restrictions on it. And they want to adopt the strategy of the Baker-Hamilton report. Many of these same people who are now urging the adoption of a resolution said we need to send more troops. Well, when you look at it, the President is sending some more troops for a new strategy which involves the Iraqi leadership, Prime Minister al-Maliki, the Shia, as well as the Sunni and Kurdish leaders. They are now fighting without limitations on the rules of engagement. Our additional forces will be there at the request of al-Maliki to help him stabilize the country. This is the last best chance. This is the chance to leave a stable Iraq which will not become a terrorist ground for al-Qaeda.

Sunday, I had the opportunity to talk to Jim Baker, the lead name on the Baker-Hamilton report. I said: Jim, is the President's surge what you recommend militarily? He said yes. That is precisely what the Baker-Hamilton commission recommended. He also recommended additional diplomatic efforts. But in terms of the military effort, he said: This is what we recommended.

Now, how do we send troops over and then think maybe we can get some political cover back home by saying we don't really agree with it? I don't think that does anything of real significance. There are some things a resolution passed by this Congress expressing disapproval of the President's plan would do, and I think they are significant and serious.

No. 1, it would send a message to those we fight against—al-Qaeda, the Baathists, Sunni insurgents—that we are not serious; we don't intend to support our men who are supporting the Iraqi military. It gives them cause to fight harder and stay longer.

No. 2, it sends a message to our friends whom Secretary Rice is trying to bring in to help rebuild the economy of Iraq and provide jobs for unemployed young Iraqis—essential if we want to win 80 percent of the battle against radical Islam, which is ideological. It would tell them: you probably better not put too much money on the Iraqis because the U.S. Congress is going to pull the plug and then it will descend into chaos and any dollars we invest will be gone.

Third, I would ask my colleagues to think about the message it sends to the troops who are there, to the troops who will be going there. They are over there fighting. They are risking their lives every day. They are willing to take on the fight because they believe it is an important fight. They believe it is a

fight we can and we must win militarily. What message does it send to the families back home? I think you can guess what that answer is.

I saw a very interesting article in the Washington Post on Sunday. Robert Kagan at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and a Transatlantic Fellow at the German Marshall Fund, has written a book. He said:

Grand Delusion: Politicians in Both Parties Act as if They Can Make the War Go Away Soon. It Won't.

He warns about all we are doing when we have laid out a plan and reinforcements for the Iraqi troops. He said:

Back in Washington, however, Democratic and Republican Members of Congress are looking for a different kind of political solution: The solution to their problems in presidential primaries and elections almost two years off. Resolutions disapproving the troop increase have proliferated on both sides of the aisle. Many of their proponents frankly, even proudly, admit they are responding to current public mood. Those who think they were elected sometimes to lead rather than to follow seem to be in the minority.

And he goes on to say that those who call for an end to the war don't want to talk about the fact that the war in Iraq and in the region will not end but will only grow more dangerous if and when we walk away.

As I said, our intelligence community leaders, in open testimony a couple of weeks ago before the Senate Intelligence Committee, said if we walk away, leaving Iraq without an army and a security force adequate to sustain general order, peace and order in that country, not only will innocent Iraqis be slaughtered, there will be an open invitation for others to come in. How long can the Shias oppress the Sunnis without having the Jordanians and the Saudis and maybe the Egyptians come in to support them? We have already heard they would do that, to protect the Sunnis. And if the Sunni supporters came in, it would take about a New York minute for Iran to come in on behalf of the Shia. What kind of conflagration would ensue? It would take a lot more American troops to protect our ally Israel and to try to stop the killing.

In addition, we know that al-Qaeda would have a safe haven. And al-Qaeda is not mad because we are in Iraq; they just want to win in Iraq. Muqtada al-Sadr, the No. 2 man, has been very eloquent, and he has been backed up by his boss, Osama bin Laden, who says: We have to win. Al-Qaeda needs to restore chaos to Iraq so they will have a safe haven in which to operate, train their suicide bombers, their jihadists, develop means of command and control once again, perhaps get weapons of mass destruction. Well, that is what happens if we walk away and leave Iraq in chaos.

Back to Robert Kagan's piece:

Some people assume that if we can get the troops withdrawn, then it won't be a problem for all of our Senators running for President in 2008. Should any one of them win, they

think by getting out of Iraq now, it won't be a problem.

Bob Kagan says that:

That is a delusion. Not only a democratic delusion, but some conservatives and Republicans have thrown up their hands. And they think that if we walk away, somehow the whole mess will simply solve itself and fade away.

He said:

Talk about a fantasy. The fact is the United States cannot escape the Iraq crisis or the Middle East crisis of which it is a part and will not be able to escape it for years. And if Iraq does collapse, it will not be the end of our problems, but the beginning of a new and much bigger set of problems.

Well, Mr. President, I think that sets it up very well. I hope our colleagues will think about that. I hope they will consider that when they are talking about passing a resolution. It sends the wrong message to the enemies, to our allies, and to our troops and their families at home.

This war radical Islam has declared on us is a generational war, as the President said. We best be laying plans to do our best to protect our country from repeated attacks such as September 11 by al-Qaeda. That is at stake. By being in Iraq, by having good intelligence at home, we have been fortunate to avoid another September 11 attack. If al-Qaeda had planned and regrouped, we would be much more likely to have another.

I ask unanimous consent a copy of the article by Mr. Kagan be printed in the RECORD after my remarks on Iraq.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 28, 2007]

GRAND DELUSION: POLITICIANS IN BOTH PARTIES ACT AS IF THEY CAN MAKE THE WAR GO AWAY SOON. IT WON'T.

(By Robert Kagan)

It's quite a juxtaposition. In Iraq, American soldiers are finally beginning the hard job of establishing a measure of peace, security and order in critical sections of Baghdad—the essential prerequisite for the lasting political solution everyone claims to want. They've launched attacks on Sunni insurgent strongholds and begun reining in Moqtada al-Sadr's militia. And they've embarked on these operations with the expectation that reinforcements will soon be on the way: the more than 20,000 troops President Bush has ordered to Iraq and the new commander he has appointed to fight the insurgency as it has not been fought since the war began.

Back in Washington, however, Democratic and Republican members of Congress are looking for a different kind of political solution: the solution to their problems in presidential primaries and elections almost two years off. Resolutions disapproving the troop increase have proliferated on both sides of the aisle. Many of their proponents frankly, even proudly, admit they are responding to the current public mood, as if that is what they were put in office to do. Those who think they were elected sometimes to lead rather than follow seem to be in a minority.

The most popular resolutions simply oppose the troop increase without offering much useful guidance on what to do instead, other than perhaps go back to the Baker-Hamilton commission's vague plan for a

gradual withdrawal. Sen. Hillary Clinton wants to cap the number of troops in Iraq at 137,500. No one explains why this is the right number, why it shouldn't be 20,000 troops lower or higher. But that's not really the point, is it?

Other critics claim that these are political cop-outs, which they are. These supposedly braver critics demand a cutoff of funds for the war and the start of a withdrawal within months. But they're not honest either, since they refuse to answer the most obvious and necessary questions: What do they propose the United States do when, as a result of withdrawal, Iraq explodes and ethnic cleansing on a truly horrific scale begins? What do they propose our response should be when the entire region becomes a war zone, when al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations establish bases in Iraq from which to attack neighboring states as well as the United States? Even the Iraq Study Group acknowledged that these are likely consequences of precipitate withdrawal.

Those who call for an "end to the war" don't want to talk about the fact that the war in Iraq and in the region will not end but will only grow more dangerous. Do they recommend that we then do nothing, regardless of the consequences? Or are they willing to say publicly, right now, that they would favor sending U.S. troops back into Iraq to confront those new dangers? Answering those questions really would be honest and brave.

Of course, most of the discussion of Iraq isn't about Iraq at all. The war has become a political abstraction, a means of positioning oneself at home.

To the extent that people think about Iraq, many seem to believe it is a problem that can be made to go away. Once American forces depart, Iraq will no longer be our problem. Joseph Biden, one of the smartest foreign policy hands in the Senate, recently accused President Bush of sending more troops so that he could pass the Iraq war on to his successor. Biden must assume that if the president took his advice and canceled the troop increase, then somehow Iraq would no longer be a serious crisis when President Biden entered the White House in 2009.

This is a delusion, but it is by no means only a Democratic delusion. Many conservatives and Republicans, including erstwhile supporters of the war, have thrown up their hands in anger at the Iraqi people or the Iraqi government. They, too, seem to believe that if American troops leave, because Iraqis don't "deserve" our help, then somehow the whole mess will solve itself or simply fade away. Talk about a fantasy. The fact is, the United States cannot escape the Iraq crisis, or the Middle East crisis of which it is a part, and will not be able to escape it for years. And if Iraq does collapse, it will not be the end of our problems but the beginning of a new and much bigger set of problems.

I would think that anyone wanting to be president in January 2009 would be hoping and praying that the troop increase works. The United States will be dealing with Iraq one way or another in 2009, no matter what anyone says or does today. The only question is whether it is an Iraq that is salvageable or an Iraq sinking further into chaos and destruction and dragging America along with it.

A big part of the answer will come soon in the battle for Baghdad. Politicians in both parties should realize that success in this mission is in their interest, as well as the nation's. Here's a wild idea: Forget the political posturing, be responsible, and provide the moral and material support our forces need and expect. The next president will thank you.

Mr. BOND. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I start by telling the Senator from Missouri how much I appreciate his leadership on this issue. As the ranking member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, he knows as well as anyone what is at stake in Iraq and in the global war on terror. I know his son, Sam, is a member of the Marine Corps and has served in Iraq. I believe he is either back or headed back here very soon, so this is a matter in which the Senator from Missouri has a personal investment, in addition to the larger investment all Americans have in making sure our security is protected to the extent possible. That is what it boils down to.

Some say we have to do this for the Iraqis. I suggest, as laudable as that is, we need to do this for us. What do I mean by "this"? I mean what the Iraq Study Group—the bipartisan group created to look into the challenge of the conflict in Iraq—recommended. They pointed out quite clearly that it is in America's vital security interests to leave Iraq when we do. Of course, that is the goal we all share. We want to leave Iraq, but we must leave Iraq based on conditions where Iraq can sustain itself, defend itself, and govern itself.

It is bewildering to see a vote like we saw last Friday in the Senate where GEN David Petraeus, the new commander in Iraq, was confirmed unanimously by this Senate, yet there are those who say: Yes, we are going to confirm you, General, unanimously. We are going to say nice things about you and your talents and dedication and patriotism that you have demonstrated by your service, but the plan that you are the architect of, we are not going to support it. We are going to pass a sense-of-the-Senate resolution which, in his own words, undermines his ability to be successful in America's ability to protect its national security interests by leaving Iraq in a condition that it can sustain, govern, and defend itself, and which sends a wrong message to our enemies.

The consequences of failure in Iraq are best summed up by the Iraq Study Group on page 34. They said that a chaotic Iraq would provide a still stronger base of operations for terrorists who seek to act regionally or even globally. Al-Qaeda will portray any failure by the United States in Iraq as a significant victory that will be featured prominently as they recruit for their cause in the region around the world.

It will surely be a failed state if we leave Iraq before conditions on the ground permit the Iraqis to govern, sustain, and defend themselves. It will likely lead to a failed state much as Afghanistan was after the Soviet Union was run out of Afghanistan in 1979.

What was that condition? We know all too well on September 11, 2001, when America was hit by al-Qaeda on our

own shores, that what happened in the interim between the time the Soviet Union left Afghanistan was a rise of the Taliban and al-Qaeda, including Osama bin Laden, who was plotting and planning and training and then exporting terror attacks against the United States and against our allies.

It is entirely probable, in my opinion, that if we leave Iraq prematurely, before it can sustain, govern, and defend itself, Iraq will become another failed state like Afghanistan, another place where terrorists can train, recruit, and then export terrorist attacks against the United States and our allies.

It is also likely that if we leave Iraq prematurely, it would lead to a broader regional conflict, probably involving Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, and we may have to later return at a greater cost to our Nation.

This is another matter to which I don't think the people have paid enough attention: to leave Iraq prematurely would lead to massive human suffering. The other day, the Judiciary Committee had a hearing on Iraqi refugees. Of course, there are brave Iraqis who have worked alongside America and our allies to try to restore democracy to that country after Saddam's bloodthirsty reign. They are worried, as they should be, that if America pulls out, along with our coalition partners, before Iraq is able to sustain, govern, and defend itself, they will be slaughtered. It will be ethnic cleansing where Shia will kill Sunni. It will draw in, likely, the Sunni majority nations such as Saudi Arabia to defend the Sunnis against ethnic cleansing.

We are at a crossroads. The choices are not necessarily good ones, but they are the choices with which our Nation is confronted. We can either stay with the status quo which, frankly, I don't know anyone who believes the status quo is working or, No. 2, we can, as some have suggested, cut off funding for our troops and result in a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq or, No. 3, we can devise a new strategy in an effort to succeed where the current strategy has not in Iraq.

I believe the obvious choice is No. 3. If we are going to confirm a new Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, as we have done; if we are going to confirm a new general leading coalition forces in Iraq, like David Petraeus, as we have done; if we are going to confirm a new commander of Central Command, Admiral Fallon, as I am confident we will do; we need to ask for their advice, get their advice, and, frankly, take their advice. I am afraid this has become far too political and not focused, as it should be, on a bipartisan basis, on what is in America's strategic and security self-interest.

The Washington Post summed it up in an editorial this way. They said legislators need a better way to act on their opposition to the current policy than passing a nonbinding resolution that may cover them politically but have no practical impact other than

perhaps the negative one suggested by the general—and they are talking about General Petraeus. What are the negative impacts? General Petraeus made that clear in the nomination hearings before the Senate Committee on Armed Services.

Senator MCCAIN asked:

Suppose we send you additional troops and we tell the troops, while we support you, we are convinced you cannot accomplish your mission, and we do not support the mission that we are sending you on. What effect does that have on the morale of the troops?

General Petraeus:

Well, it would not be a beneficial effect, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN:

A Senate-passed resolution of disapproval for this new strategy in Iraq would give the enemy some encouragement, some feeling that well, some clear expression that the American people are divided?

General Petraeus:

That's correct, sir.

I understand as well as anybody the reservations that Members of the Senate have about the new plan. The question we all have is, Will it work? Obviously, there are no guarantees. However, I know there is one sure plan for failure that will embolden our enemies, undermine our allies, and demoralize our troops, and that is to pass a resolution of no confidence in the only plan that has now been proposed for a new way forward in Iraq: working with the Iraqi Government, Prime Minister Maliki, making it clear there are benchmarks they need to meet; that it is their country, and they need to take the lead. We will support them. We will help stiffen their spine, particularly when it comes to preventing sectarian violence and taking on the militias which have ruled the streets in so much of Iraq. But this is the only chance and the only alternative that has been offered by anyone, so far, as to the way forward.

I make an appeal to our colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle. On November 7, we had an election. As a result of that election, Democrats no longer were a minority party but became the majority in the Congress, both in the House and in the Senate. While I understand that as a minority party frequently we do not have the opportunity to set the agenda or to provide the leadership and are left with criticizing what the majority party does, my hope would be that the new majority would rise to the occasion, would set partisanship aside as much as possible, particularly with regard to our national security interests, would not focus on the 2008 election or worry about individual political outcomes. My hope is the new majority would use this as an opportunity to work with the new minority to send a vote of confidence and to provide a plan, support for the plan that has been drafted by General Petraeus and supported by all our military leadership for the possibility of a successful way forward in Iraq.

Frankly, for our friends on the other side of the aisle to merely criticize and offer resolutions of no confidence that are not binding is not an act of encouragement. It is not an act of patriotism but, unfortunately, as General Petraeus said, it will undermine our troops' morale and embolden our enemies. We all owe it to the troops who have risked their lives, to the families who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom and to protect our security, to do our very best to work together to try to support a way forward in Iraq which has the best chance of success.

My hope is, in the coming days, through this debate, we will agree to do that, and we will avoid making political statements that have no binding effect and which serve only to embolden our enemies and undermine our friends.

I see the distinguished Senator from Arizona on the floor of the Senate, and I yield to him.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I join my colleague, the Senator from Texas, in urging the Senate to think very carefully about passing what appears to be a nonbinding resolution, but what, in fact, has dramatic consequences.

It is true that a nonbinding resolution would not change the policy of the President; he is the Commander in Chief. He has decided on a new strategy after consultation with a lot of people, and that new strategy is now being implemented in Iraq as we speak.

The Senate, last Friday, confirmed GEN David Petraeus to carry out that policy. By the way, it seems quite incongruous we would, on the one hand, confirm General Petraeus, pat him on the back, and say: Go do the mission in Iraq—by the way, we disagree with the mission. That is one of the bad messages that is sent.

I would like to talk a little bit more about the sending of messages with the nonbinding resolutions. That is obviously what the proponents of the resolutions would like to do. They have talked about sending a message. Mostly they are trying to send a message to the President. Of course, any Senator who wants to talk to the President has that capability. We do not need to send messages to the President publicly in areas that cause harm. We should think about the consequences of such a message to our enemies, to our allies, and most especially to the troops that we send in harm's way.

Think for a moment about the consequences of a message that says that we disagree with the President's strategy, we disagree with the mission, and we don't believe that any more troops should be involved or that the United States should remain in Iraq beyond a very limited period of time. The message that sends to our enemies is a devastating one.

As General Petraeus testified before the Senate Committee on Armed Serv-

ices, war is about breaking the will of your opponent. He feared the consequences of such a resolution which he said would not be helpful because it would send a signal to our enemies that we don't have the support in the United States Government necessary to break the will of the opponent.

These terrorists well understand this is a contest of wills. Can they outlast us? Osama bin Laden thinks we are the "weak horse," as he puts it, and he is the "strong horse"; that we left Vietnam, that we left Lebanon, that we left Somalia, and we will leave Iraq before the job is done as well. And he believes that. So there is a test of wills going on. And if the enemies come to believe they can outlast us, that their will is stronger than ours, then it is very difficult to defeat them in this war against terrorism.

The message it sends to our allies is we are not necessarily a reliable ally. Certainly, to people in the neighborhood—the people in Afghanistan, in Pakistan, and elsewhere—you can imagine they would quickly begin to hedge their bets because of the neighborhood in which they live. If we are going to leave, and they have to continue to live with these bad actors, then, as before September 11, you will see them begin to hedge their bets and provide support for, in one way or another, terrorists who live in that neighborhood. That is against the national security interest of the United States.

The message that is sent to our troops is perhaps the most devastating because it says: We have sent you on a mission, and yet we do not believe in the mission. We are putting you in harm's way. You may, in fact, die trying to complete your mission, but it is not a mission that we believe in.

Think about the message that sends to the troops and to the families.

Very interestingly, last Friday, "NBC Nightly News" had an interview with three soldiers from Iraq talking about this very point. It was in the Brian Williams newscast. He called on Richard Engel, reporting from Baghdad, who had interviewed these three soldiers. I think what they had to say should instruct us. He talked about the new mission they were on, and he said:

It's not just the new mission the soldiers are adjusting to. They have something else on their minds:

This is David Engel, the reporter, speaking—the growing debate at home about the war. Troops here say they are increasingly frustrated by American criticism of the war. Many take it personally, believing it is also criticism of what they've been fighting for. Twenty-one-year-old Specialist Tyler Johnson is on his first tour in Iraq. He thinks skeptics should come over and see what it's like firsthand before criticizing.

Then, this is what SPC Tyler Johnson said:

Those people are dying. You know what I'm saying? You may support—"Oh, we support the troops," but you're not supporting what they do, what they share and sweat for, what they believe for, what we die for. It just don't make sense to me.

Engel then said:

Staff Sergeant Manuel Sahagun has served in Afghanistan and is now in his second tour in Iraq. He says people back home can't have it both ways.

Then SSG Manuel Sahagun said:

One thing I don't like is when people back home say they support the troops but they don't support the war. If they're going to support us, support us all the way.

Finally, Engel said:

Specialist Peter Manna thinks people have forgotten the toll the war has taken.

SPC Peter Manna said:

If they don't think we're doing a good job, everything that we've done here is all in vain.

Engel closed his report saying:

Apache Company has lost two soldiers and now worries their country may be abandoning the mission they died for.

That is the message we send to our troops: that they may be dying in vain, that they may be putting their life on the line in vain because we do not support the mission we put them in harm's way to accomplish. That is a devastating blow to morale.

Just imagine what you would do if you were the parent or the spouse of one of those soldiers who got killed and came to believe the mission we had sent them on was no longer a mission that we supported, and yet we continue to keep them in harm's way.

My view is, if you think this war is lost or that we cannot win it, that you have the courage of your convictions and vote to cut off the funds and bring the folks home right now before any more die. But if you believe, as the President does, that we must not leave Iraq a failed state, that there is still an opportunity there to succeed, and that his plan deserves a chance to succeed, then we should not support resolutions that send a different message.

That is why I want to urge my colleagues to think very carefully before supporting any of these resolutions which may be nonbinding on the President but, nevertheless, have severe consequences to our enemies, to our allies, and to the troops we put into harm's way. This is serious business we are about. We need to consider it seriously and not undercut the troops we put in harm's way.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TESTER). The time for morning business has expired.

FAIR MINIMUM WAGE ACT OF 2007

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2) to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage.

Pending:

Reid (for Baucus) amendment No. 100, in the nature of a substitute.

McConnell (for Gregg) amendment No. 101 (to amendment No. 100), to provide Congress a second look at wasteful spending by establishing enhanced rescission authority under fast-track procedures.

Kyl amendment No. 115 (to amendment No. 100), to extend through December 31, 2008, the depreciation treatment of leasehold, restaurant, and retail space improvements.

Enzi (for Ensign/Inhofe) amendment No. 152 (to amendment No. 100), to reduce document fraud, prevent identity theft, and preserve the integrity of the Social Security system.

Enzi (for Ensign) amendment No. 153 (to amendment No. 100), to preserve and protect Social Security benefits of American workers, including those making minimum wage, and to help ensure greater Congressional oversight of the Social Security system by requiring that both Houses of Congress approve a totalization agreement before the agreement, giving foreign workers Social Security benefits, can go into effect.

Vitter/Voinovich amendment No. 110 (to amendment No. 100), to amend title 44 of the United States Code, to provide for the suspension of fines under certain circumstances for first-time paperwork violations by small business concerns.

DeMint amendment No. 155 (to amendment No. 100), to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for cooperative governing of individual health insurance coverage offered in interstate commerce, and to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 regarding the disposition of unused health benefits in cafeteria plans and flexible spending arrangements and the use of health savings accounts for the payment of health insurance premiums for high deductible health plans purchased in the individual market.

DeMint amendment No. 156 (to amendment No. 100), to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 regarding the disposition of unused health benefits in cafeteria plans and flexible spending arrangements.

DeMint amendment No. 157 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 100), to increase the Federal minimum wage by an amount that is based on applicable State minimum wages.

DeMint amendment No. 159 (to amendment No. 100), to protect individuals from having their money involuntarily collected and used for lobbying by a labor organization.

DeMint amendment No. 160 (to amendment No. 100), to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow certain small businesses to defer payment of tax.

DeMint amendment No. 161 (to amendment No. 100), to prohibit the use of flexible schedules by Federal employees unless such flexible schedule benefits are made available to private sector employees not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007.

DeMint amendment No. 162 (to amendment No. 100), to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 regarding the minimum wage.

Kennedy (for Kerry) amendment No. 128 (to amendment No. 100), to direct the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to establish a pilot program to provide regulatory compliance assistance to small business concerns.

Martinez amendment No. 105 (to amendment No. 100), to clarify the house parent exemption to certain wage and hour requirements.

Sanders amendment No. 201 (to amendment No. 100), to express the sense of the Senate concerning poverty.

Gregg amendment No. 203 (to amendment No. 100), to enable employees to use employee option time.

Burr amendment No. 195 (to amendment No. 100), to provide for an exemption to a minimum wage increase for certain employers who contribute to their employees' health benefit expenses.

Chambliss amendment No. 118 (to amendment No. 100), to provide minimum wage rates for agricultural workers.

Kennedy (for Feinstein) amendment No. 167 (to amendment No. 118), to improve agricultural job opportunities, benefits, and security for aliens in the United States.

Enzi (for Allard) amendment No. 169 (to amendment No. 100), to prevent identity theft by allowing the sharing of social security data among government agencies for immigration enforcement purposes.

Enzi (for Cornyn) amendment No. 135 (to amendment No. 100), to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the Federal unemployment surtax.

Enzi (for Cornyn) amendment No. 138 (to amendment No. 100), to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand workplace health incentives by equalizing the tax consequences of employee athletic facility use.

Sessions (for Kyl) amendment No. 209 (to amendment No. 100), to extend through December 31, 2012, the increased expensing for small businesses.

Division I of Sessions (for Kyl) amendment No. 210 (to amendment No. 100), to provide for the permanent extension of increasing expensing for small businesses, the depreciation treatment of leasehold, restaurant, and retail space improvements, and the work opportunity tax credit.

Division II of Sessions (for Kyl) amendment No. 210 (to amendment No. 100), to provide for the permanent extension of increasing expensing for small businesses, the depreciation treatment of leasehold, restaurant, and retail space improvements, and the work opportunity tax credit.

Division III of Sessions (for Kyl) amendment No. 210 (to amendment No. 100), to provide for the permanent extension of increasing expensing for small businesses, the depreciation treatment of leasehold, restaurant, and retail space improvements, and the work opportunity tax credit.

Division IV of Sessions (for Kyl) amendment No. 210 (to amendment No. 100), to provide for the permanent extension of increasing expensing for small businesses, the depreciation treatment of leasehold, restaurant, and retail space improvements, and the work opportunity tax credit.

Division V of Sessions (for Kyl) amendment No. 210 (to amendment No. 100), to provide for the permanent extension of increasing expensing for small businesses, the depreciation treatment of leasehold, restaurant, and retail space improvements, and the work opportunity tax credit.

Durbin amendment No. 221 (to amendment No. 157), to change the enactment date.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12:15 p.m. shall be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with the time from 11:55 to 12:05 under the control of the minority leader, and the time from 12:05 to 12:15 under the control of the majority leader.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I yield myself 5 minutes to speak on the minimum wage.

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, a little more than 2 years ago, Rev. Jim Wallis and Rev. Bob Griswold—who was then head of the Episcopal Church—presented to Congress a document that