

64 from Massachusetts; more than 23,000 have been wounded. In my home community, SGT Alexander Fuller of Centerville, MA, was buried last week; Keith Callahan of Woburn, MA—Woburn, MA, that had a higher percentage of soldiers killed in Vietnam than any other community in our State. High school class after high school class after high school class joined the U.S. Marines. They were in the thick of the fighting with devastating losses. Keith Callahan, in his fourth trip to Iraq, was killed just 10 days ago. The services in that community took place last week.

Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have been killed, and millions have fled their homes. We have spent hundreds of billions of dollars on the war already. Today the President is asking for hundreds of billions of dollars more. President Bush insists on his policy of escalation, while most of us in Congress are increasingly convinced that deescalation is the only realistic strategy. The American people do not support further escalation of this war. The legislation on which we seek an honest debate is intended to make a record of who is on the side of the American people and opposes sending tens of thousands more American troops into this civil war.

Despite the clear result of the November election, our Republican colleagues are not prepared to face the truth on Iraq. They are determined to avoid a debate on the most important national security issue of our time. They are willing to allow tens of thousands of more young men and women to be dropped in the cauldron of a civil war.

The cost in precious American lives is reason enough to end this mistaken and misguided war, but the cost at home came into full view yesterday as we received the President's budget. This President's budget devotes more than \$200 billion to the war in Iraq. Where does the money come from? It comes from the Children's Health Insurance Program, as the President's budget underfunds the CHIP program by \$8 billion. That program provides health care to low-income children. It has had bipartisan support in the Senate and the House of Representatives. It has made an extraordinary difference to the quality of health of millions of children. There are millions of children who are qualified for this program. But because the Federal Government doesn't provide the help to the States, those children are not going to get covered.

Make no mistake about it. We are taking those resources that ought to be devoted to the CHIP program and sending them to Iraq. It comes from our children's education, the No Child Left Behind Act, because this budget underfunds the No Child Left Behind reforms by almost \$15 billion. What are we saying? We are not going to get the well-trained teachers that this legislation requires. We are not going to have the adequacy of supplementary serv-

ices to help those children in high school. We are not going to move toward smaller class sizes. We are not going to have an effective program to bring in parents. We are not going to have the examination of these children to find out what they need in terms of help in their classes. No, because we are shipping billions of dollars to Iraq.

Twenty-three thousand children are in the streets of Philadelphia today, having dropped out of school; 22,000 children have dropped out of school in Cleveland, OH. It is happening all over the country. And what are we doing? Sending away billions and billions of dollars that ought to be there for prevention programs to stop those children from dropping out of school, to help those children get back into school so they will have useful and productive lives. They are the ones who are paying for these wars.

As to seniors, our disabled citizens, the President cut \$66 billion from the Medicaid Program which is a lifeline to millions of retirees and disabled children. I was there when President Johnson said: You work hard, you pay into the Medicare Program, pay into those programs, and we guarantee you that you are going to have the health care you need for the rest of your life. That is a commitment that we made. Now we are skimping on it. We didn't provide at that time a prescription drug program. We provided one eventually that served more for the drug industry and the HMOs than it did for the senior citizens. We are cutting back on health care for our seniors and the disabled.

It comes from our workers who are looking for good jobs to support their families because the President's budget slashes \$1 billion from programs that train Americans for jobs for the future. How many speeches will we hear about competitiveness and the problems we are facing in terms of the world economy, how we are going to have to redouble our efforts in order to be competitive, to have the new industries that will provide new jobs and new benefits and new opportunities for our citizens. Every Member of this body will be making that speech someplace in their State next week. We know that. What are we doing?

In my State of Massachusetts, we have 275,000 people who are unemployed, and we have 78,000 job vacancies. The only thing that is lacking is training. We have 24 applications for every opening for training. People want the training to get the skills to participate and take care of their families. What does this President do? He cuts that program. That is part of the cost.

People are asking back home—down in New Bedford and Fall River and Lowell and Lawrence and Holyoke and Springfield—who is going to stand up for us? It is not only the loss of their sons and daughters from those communities, but they see that it is gutting the lifelines to their communities, the children and the elderly, those who are

the most vulnerable in our society. They are paying the price. Read the President's budget. Make no mistake about it. Who is paying the price? They are paying the price, the neediest people in our society.

Then it comes from the poor who are struggling against the bitter cold. It cuts 17 percent of the funding for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program that helps low-income families heat their homes. Maybe it is warm in certain parts of this country, but it is cold as can be in many others. There are a lot of needy people in those cold areas where there is a completely inadequate fuel assistance program now. This administration has cut back on that program year after year after year, and this year is no different, a 17-percent reduction.

Most of the elderly people, the needy people in my State, need to have their oil tanks, if they are using home heating oil, filled three times a year. This won't even let them get one tank of fuel assistance in their homes over the year. The poor are paying a fearsome price. They are seeing their funding diverted to these conflicts and the surge in Iraq.

This is a war that never should have happened. It is a war that should be brought to an end. Yet the administration is allowing it to go on and on, mistake after mistake after mistake. This terrible war is having an effect not only on our troops, who are paying the highest price, but on our children, our elderly, our schools, our workers, and the poorest of the poor here at home. Make no mistake about it. While the President forges ahead with a surge in Iraq, the American people need a surge at home. Americans see the cost of their health care and the cost of college going up. What about a surge in our health and education policy to help meet their needs? What about a surge in those areas?

I have introduced legislation which would require the President to get the authority he needs from Congress before moving forward with further escalation in Iraq. I intend to seek a vote on it, unless the President changes course. The debate is about what is best for our troops and our national security. Our forces have served with great valor. They have done everything they have been asked to do. Sending more of them into a civil war will not make success any more likely. We have a responsibility to vote on this issue before it is too late. The American people deserve to know where the Republicans stand and where the representatives in the Congress stand.

I look forward to that debate and a vote at the earliest possible time.

I yield the floor.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Carolina is recognized.

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, how much time does the minority have?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority has 8½ minutes.

Mr. DEMINT. I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Colorado be able to speak for 10 minutes following my remarks and the remarks of Senator COBURN.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WORLDWIDE WAR ON TERROR

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I rise to speak about one of the most important issues of our time: the worldwide war on terror.

I have to say I was disappointed to read in this morning's Roll Call that many of my Democratic colleagues are using this debate for the 2008 elections rather than focusing on the real damage that the resolution we have been discussing will do to our national security.

One of our greatest Presidents, Theodore Roosevelt, once said, "It is not the critic who counts. The credit," he said, "belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming.

"The credit," Roosevelt said, belongs to the man "who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly."

At this very moment, our Commander in Chief and those he commands are daring greatly.

Our men and women in uniform are paying with blood, sweat, and tears. Yet many in this body prefer to sit in the stands and offer criticism rather than support.

For the past 50 years, the Middle East has been a cauldron of brutality, war, and despair. The region's instability has threatened the entire globe and reached our shores on 9/11 with a stark awakening.

This is why we are involved in the Middle East. The future security of our homeland is tied directly to a successful outcome not only in Iraq but in Afghanistan, Lebanon, the Palestinian territory, and a number of Middle East countries that harbor evil men who foment hate through a perverted version of Islam.

Yet as our efforts in Iraq encounter fierce resistance from a determined and evil enemy, support for our efforts has waned here in Congress. Instead, many of my colleagues prefer to support a nonbinding resolution that would express disapproval of the President's plan to reinforce our troops in Iraq.

Voting for this resolution is not leadership, it is criticism—criticism without the courage of offering real solutions. While this resolution may be toothless by force of law, its sym-

bolism is dangerous. Voting to condemn the President's plan is a vote of no confidence in the mission we have told our troops to fight and die for. But it is also a slap in the face to General Petraeus just days after we voted unanimously to support his leadership of our troops in Iraq.

"Godspeed, General," was what one of my colleagues said before introducing the very resolution that would undermine the general's authority and his plan for victory.

This is not leadership. We were elected to make tough decisions and that requires understanding our choices, selecting the best choice, and then following through. But I am afraid the critics in this body do not acknowledge the real choices before us. There are only three:

First, to continue the unworkable status quo; second, to admit defeat and withdraw; third, to renew our strength until we win.

I respect my colleagues who disagree with the President's strategy in Iraq, but only if they exercise leadership and support an alternative solution, one that proposes a serious path to victory, or announces defeat and ends our involvement immediately, not only in Iraq but throughout the Middle East, because America will no longer have any credibility to carry out our work in any part of the world.

If my colleagues do not support sending reinforcements to Iraq, they should introduce legislation blocking that action. While I believe this is shortsighted and wrong, it would at least be genuine leadership.

My hope is we will stop trying to second guess past decisions in order to lay blame and instead remember we are locked in a struggle much larger than Iraq. It is a struggle of security, hope, and freedom versus hate, despair, and fear. The battlefield is the entire world.

We must understand the stakes and demonstrate real leadership. This is not the President's war, it is freedom's war, and we all share the responsibility for the outcome.

A century later, Teddy Roosevelt is still correct. The critic "who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better" is destined to be relegated to that terrible place "with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

There is only one policy worthy of the blood and sweat of our troops: a policy that completes our mission with dignity, honor, and victory.

Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of my time and yield the floor.

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

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I have not come to the floor, except once, in the 2 years I have been here to discuss the war in Iraq. I have been to Iraq and had experience in Iraq as a medical missionary during the first gulf war.

I am very much concerned as to how the world will read us. What we know is that enemies try to defeat us not by trying to defeat us on the battlefield or in Iraq; they try to defeat our will, try to defeat the will of the American public.

Senator DEMINT talked about leadership. Leadership is laying out the real consequences of our action. What are those consequences? What next? What is going to happen next? What is going to happen? We heard this morning that we are trying to delay this resolution. We are not trying to delay it. As a matter of fact, they are saying we would not debate it. We are debating it right now. The fact is, we believe you ought to have a resolution that says we support our troops in this group of resolutions. Unless we get some semblance of saying we want to send a signal to our troops that we support them, we should not have a rule that precludes that.

So politics aside, and the next election aside, and the Presidential election aside, what does it mean to the American people about what we end up doing in Iraq? That is the question we should be asking. We should be making sure that the mistake we do not make is to have an ill-informed American public about what the consequences will be.

Regardless of whether we should be in Iraq, we are there. We cannot change that. The question comes, what does the Iraq Study Group say? They said we needed to secure Baghdad; they said we needed reinforcements to be able to do that; they said we needed more funds to make a difference in people's lives. These are the funds that go to the generals to actually approve things.

Can we accomplish something in Iraq or do we walk away? Here is what happens when we walk away. No. 1, there will be a genocide in Iraq. The minority Sunni population will scatter out of Iraq, and those who don't will be killed.

The northern Iraqis, the Kurds—what will happen to them? If we are gone and full-blown civil war breaks out, what will happen to the Kurds? This is a group of 36 million people who have not had a homeland since the Ottoman Empire. Genocide was committed against them by Saddam. What will happen to them? They will be seen as a risk to Turkey. Turkey already has problems with its Kurdish population.

What will happen in Lebanon? Probably civil war.

What will happen in Jordan?

What will happen to the Sunni gulf states, as they now fear Iran and its dominance?

This is a war Iran wants us to leave. Why? Because they want to empower themselves to be the dominant force in the Middle East. We can talk about all of the resolutions and how we disagree; that is basically political posturing, and you can disagree. But as the Senator from South Carolina said, unless