

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECESS

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that under the previous order the Senate stand in recess until the appointed hour.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senate will stand in recess until the appointed hour.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:22 p.m., recessed until 3:30 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. MURRAY).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that during the time controlled by the Democrats this afternoon, the following be recognized to speak for up to 10 minutes each, except where noted, and that each side alternate when appropriate: BOXER, MURRAY, DODD, 15 minutes; KERRY, 15 minutes; NELSON of Florida, REED, HARKIN, and WHITEHOUSE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. McCASKILL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CALIFORNIA CASUALTIES FROM IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, today I rise to pay tribute to 37 young Americans who have been killed in Iraq since November 17, 2006. This brings to 677 the number of soldiers who were either from California or based in California that have been killed while serving our country in Iraq. This represents 22 percent of all U.S. deaths in Iraq.

SFC Tung M. Nguyen, 38, died on November 14, in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries sustained from small arms fire. Sergeant First Class Nguyen was assigned to B Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group, Fort Bragg, NC. He was from Tracy, CA.

LCpl Jeromy D. West, 20, died November 25, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal West was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, Kaneohe Bay, HI. He was from Aguanga, CA.

Cpl Dustin J. Libby, 22, died December 6, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Corporal Libby was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st

Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

SPC Micah S. Gifford, 27, died of injuries suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his unit while on patrol during combat operations in Baghdad, Iraq, on December 7. Specialist Gifford was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment, Airborne, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Fort Richardson, AK. He was from Redding, CA.

MAJ Megan M. McClung, 34, died December 6, while supporting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Major McClung was assigned to I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

SPC Nicholas P. Steinbacher, 22, died on December 10, in Baghdad, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle. Specialist Steinbacher was assigned to B Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX. He was from La Crescenta, CA.

LCpl Clinton J. Miller, 23, died December 11, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Miller was assigned to Marine Wing Support Squadron 373, Marine Wing Support Group 37, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar, CA.

Cpl Matthew V. Dillon, 25, died December 11, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Corporal Dillon was assigned to Marine Wing Support Squadron 373, Marine Wing Support Group 37, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar, CA.

LCpl Budd M. Cote, 21, died December 11, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Cote was assigned to Marine Wing Support Squadron 373, Marine Wing Support Group 37, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar, CA.

MSgt Brian P. McAnulty, 39, died December 11, when the CH-53 helicopter he was riding in crashed just after takeoff in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Master Sergeant McAnulty was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Twentynine Palms, CA.

CPT Kevin M. Kryst, 27, died December 18, from wounds received while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Captain Kryst was assigned to Marine Light-Attack Helicopter Squadron 267, Marine Aircraft Group 39, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

LCpl Nicklas J. Palmer, 19, died December 16, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Palmer was assigned to

the 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

LCpl Luke C. Yepsen, 20, died December 14, due to injuries suffered from enemy action in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Yepsen was assigned to the 1st Tank Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Twentynine Palms, CA.

Cpl Joshua D. Pickard, 20, died December 19, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Corporal Pickard was assigned to the 2nd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, NC. He was from Merced, CA.

LCpl Ryan L. Mayhan, 25, died December 21, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Mayhan was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Twentynine Palms, CA. He was from Hawthorne, CA.

LCpl Ryan J. Burgess, 21, died December 21, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Burgess was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Twentynine Palms, CA.

Hospitalman Kyle A. Nolen, 21, died December 21, in Al Anbar Province, Iraq, as a result of enemy action. Hospitalman Nolen was assigned to H Company, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Division, Regimental Combat Team 7, I Marine Expeditionary Force Forward, Twentynine Palms, CA.

LCpl Fernando S. Tamayo, 19, died December 21, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Tamayo was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Twentynine Palms, CA. He was from Fontana, CA.

SPC Elias Elias, 27, died December 23, in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle while on patrol. Specialist Elias was assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO. He was from Glendora, CA.

SPC Michael J. Crutchfield, 21, died December 23, in Balad, Iraq, of a non-combat related injury. Specialist Crutchfield was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 4th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, Fort Bragg, NC. He was from Stockton, CA.

SGT Lawrence J. Carter, 25, died December 29, in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle during combat operations. Sergeant Carter was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Schweinfurt, Germany. He was from Rancho Cucamonga, CA.

SPC Luis G. Ayala, 21, died December 28, in Taji, Iraq, of wounds suffered

when an improvised explosive device detonated near his unit while on combat patrol. Specialist Ayala was assigned to the 2nd Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX. He was from South Gate, CA.

Sgt Aron C. Blum, 22, died December 28, at the Naval Medical Center in San Diego, California, of a nonhostile cause after being evacuated from Al Anbar province, Iraq, on December 8. Sergeant Blum was assigned to Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar, CA.

PFC Ming Sun, 20, died January 9, in Ar Ramadi, Iraq, of wounds suffered when his unit came in contact with enemy forces using small arms fire during combat patrol operations. Private First Class Sun was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO. He was from Cathedral City, CA.

2LT Mark J. Daily, 23, died on January 15, in Mosul, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle. Lieutenant Daily was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Bliss, TX. He was from Irvine, CA.

CAPT Brian S. Freeman, 31, died January 20, in Karbala, Iraq, of wounds suffered when his meeting area came under attack by mortar and small arms fire. Captain Freeman was assigned to the 412th Civil Affairs Battalion, Whitehall, OH. He was from Temecula, CA.

SPC Jeffrey D. Bisson, 22, died January 20, in Karma, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his Humvee. Specialist Bisson was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 509th Infantry, Airborne, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Fort Richardson, AK. He was from Vista, CA.

LCpl Andrew G. Matus, 19, died January 21, from wounds received while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Matus was assigned to Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Special Operations Capable, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

LCpl Emilian D. Sanchez, 20, died January 21, from wounds received while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Sanchez was assigned to Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Special Operations Capable, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

SSG Jamie D. Wilson, 34, died January 22, in Fallujah, Iraq, from wounds suffered while conducting security operations in Karmah, Iraq. Staff Sergeant Wilson was assigned to the 3rd

Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment, Airborne, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Fort Richardson, AK. He was from San Diego, CA.

PFC Michael C. Balsley, 23, died on January 25, in Baghdad, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle. Private First Class Balsley was assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO. He was from Hayward, CA.

LCpl Anthony C. Melia, 20, died January 27, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Melia was assigned to Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Special Operations Capable, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA. He was from Thousand Oaks, CA.

SPC Carla J. Stewart, 37, died January 28, in Tallil, Iraq, of injuries suffered when her convoy vehicle rolled over. Specialist Stewart was assigned to the 250th Transportation Company, El Monte, CA. She was from Sun Valley, CA.

CWO 3 Cornell C. Chao, 36, died on January 28, in Najaf, Iraq, of injuries sustained when his helicopter crashed. Chief Warrant Officer Three Chao was assigned to the 4th Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX. He was from Orange, CA.

PFC David T. Toomalatai, 19, died on January 27, in Taji, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle. Private First Class Toomalatai was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX. He was from Long Beach, CA.

LCpl Adam Q. Emul, 19, died January 29, from wounds received while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Emul was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Twentynine Palms, CA.

SGT William M. Sigua, 21, died on January 31, in Bayji, Iraq, when his dismounted patrol received small arms fire. Sergeant Sigua was assigned to C Company, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC. He was from Los Altos, CA.

I would also like to pay tribute to the soldier from California who has died while serving our country in Operation Enduring Freedom since November 17.

SPC Jeffrey G. Roberson, 22, died on November 28 in Logar, Afghanistan, from injuries sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his patrol. Specialist Roberson was assigned to the 230th Military Police Company, Kaiserslautern, Germany. He was from Phelan, CA.

IRAQ ESCALATION

When General William Sherman said “war is hell,” he certainly knew what

he was talking about. After nearly 4 years in Iraq, I know of no one today who would argue with that statement. As Members of Congress, we have an awesome responsibility to decide whether to send America’s sons and daughters into war. I voted against the resolution authorizing the President to go to war in Iraq because I didn’t believe we should have been rushing to say to the President: Go it alone, you have a blank check.

This is what I said at the time, October 10, 2002, which is just before this Senate voted to give the President authority to go to war:

I never have seen a situation where the President of the United States asked for the ability to go to war alone and yet has not told the American people what that would mean. How many troops would be involved? How many casualties would there be? Would the U.S. have to foot the entire cost of using force against Iraq? If not, which nations are ready to provide financial support? Troop support? What will the cost be to rebuild Iraq? How long would our troops have to stay there? What if our troops become a target for terrorists?

Obviously, I didn’t know the answers to those questions that weighed on my heart that day, but today I know that there are more than 138,000 troops serving in Iraq, with a big escalation to come, an escalation that the Republicans would not allow us to vote on. I know that 3,098 soldiers have been killed and more than 23,000 have been wounded. I know we have spent \$379 billion and that doesn’t include the President’s latest request. And I know, as we all do, that our troops are targets for terrorism and that 61 percent of Iraqis think it is OK to shoot an American soldier. How can this President send more of our troops into a country he says he is trying to help when 61 percent of the Iraqi people say it is OK to shoot and kill an American soldier, and 71 percent of Iraqis want us out of Iraq within a year? We now have answers to the questions I raised that bleak day—terrible answers. Yet my Republican colleagues wouldn’t allow us to vote on a resolution opposing an escalation of this war, an escalation of over 40,000 troops, when you consider the support troops.

We know that a majority of Senators oppose this escalation. We know the majority of the American people oppose this escalation. Yet we can’t vote on it. Many of us have gone further. We have proposed resolutions and bills to start redeploying our troops out of Iraq. We have called on the Iraqis—a majority of us last year—to shoulder the burden of defending their own country.

It seems like yesterday when we passed the 1,000 dead mark and then 1,500 dead mark and then the 2,000 dead mark and then the 2,500 dead mark. Now it is more than 3,000 dead. I remember when we hit the 2,500 dead mark last June. A reporter at the White House press briefing asked Mr. Bush’s press secretary, Tony Snow, if the President had any reaction. Mr.

Snow said: "It's a number, and every time there's one of those 500 benchmarks, people want something."

What does that even mean? He calls 500 American dead benchmarks? That was a low point even for this administration that keeps on saying, if you don't support the war, you don't support the troops. That is hogwash. How do you support the troops when you send them into the middle of a civil war where they don't even know who is shooting at them? How do you support the troops? Three thousand ninety-eight soldiers dead is not just a number; those are people. That is 3,098 families who are forever changed. To put more of them in harm's way, to escalate our involvement does not say to me we love them. It says to me we have not thought this through. We are not listening or this administration is not listening to the Iraq Study Group. It is not listening to the military generals who came before us to say this is wrong. It is not listening to the American people.

Again and again this White House closes its eyes on the reality of this war. I know they don't want to see the tragic truth. But if you are going to make a decision to send our soldiers to war, you better be able to look at the consequences of that decision. They would not even let us vote on this escalation. The White House doesn't want that vote. They don't want to be second-guessed. They don't want to be embarrassed. They don't want to hear what this Democratic Congress has to say. And guess what. Elections have consequences—how many times has the President told us that—and this election had consequences. It means we have to take off the rose-colored glasses.

Let's look at the events of Sunday, January 28, in Iraq, as told by two Los Angeles Times reporters, Louise Rough and Borzou Daragahi. That Sunday in America happened to be my wedding anniversary, a day of rest for many, a day of relaxation, a day for religion, a day for football, a day for basketball, a day for movies, a day for fun, a day for family; in Iraq, a day of hell.

The headline of the LA Times, the following Monday, reads: "Hundreds Die in Clash near Iraq Holy City." Here is the article. I don't know if this can be seen on the television, but it is a beautiful young girl, an Iraqi teenage girl. It could be your daughter; it could be mine. She is leaving school. She is stepping down steps that are bloodied by the blood of her schoolmates. She is barely looking around, and no one is helping her. This is a sight that is too often the reality in Iraq. The child has seen what no child should ever see, what we would do anything in the world to stop our children from seeing. And she appears numb.

The reporters write about fighting erupting near holy city of Najaf on the Shiite holiday of Ashura. There were conflicting reports as to whether the fighters causing the trouble were Shi-

ite or Sunni militia, but we know that our soldiers, working with Iraqis, killed several hundred gunmen in a fierce fight and a helicopter went down, our helicopter, and we lost our people.

The reporters point out that our forces are fighting "a complex patchwork of elusive enemies," and the deaths outside of Najaf would constitute the highest daily casualty toll inflicted by U.S. and Iraqi forces since U.S. troops arrived in Baghdad shortly after the March 2003 invasion.

This group we wound up fighting, because the Iraqi soldiers couldn't handle it and they called us in, call themselves Heaven's Army, a messianic cult who believes in the imminent return of Imam Mahdi, the last in the line of Shiite saints who disappeared more than 1,000 years ago.

Nomas, who is a spokesperson for the Iraqis, went on to lament to the reporters that many Shiites believe the end days are coming, due to all of the violence. This is what he said:

There's nothing bizarre in Iraq anymore. We've seen the most incredible things.

People think the end is near, and that is what this President is sending more troops into.

Our troops have seen things we can hardly imagine, things that may haunt them throughout their lives. I have worked hard with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to try and fashion some legislation so we have a commission that is set up to look at the mental health problems of our soldiers. They are deep, the signature wounds of this war, brain damage and posttraumatic stress.

In other parts of Iraq that Sunday, in addition to that school I showed and in addition to the fight with Heaven's Army, the messianic cult, we lost two U.S. soldiers and a marine. In Kirkuk, violence raged. In Babil Province, mortar rounds killed 10, and 5 bodies were found in the Tigris River. There was an assassination in Kut, a deadly car bombing in Fallujah. In western Baghdad, explosives hidden in a wooden cart killed 4 and injured 18, and an Industry Ministry advisor and his daughter were shot to death.

On the east side of the Tigris, a bomb exploded on a bus, killing one. Two other bombs exploded, killing seven. A bank clerk was killed by gunmen in a car near her home. This was all in this one article. This is one day, January 28, one day. Fifty-four bodies were found, including a woman kidnapped 2 days prior.

And finally, in Diyala Province northeast of Baghdad, 1,500 policemen, Iraqis, were charged with absenteeism and fleeing fighting. And this is what the President is sending more of our American soldiers into, and they wouldn't let us vote on it here. It is absolutely outrageous. It is immoral that we cannot vote on whether we agree with this escalation. Our soldiers gave the Iraqis their freedom, their Government, a sovereign nation, and now it is the Iraqis' turn to decide their future.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the man who knew a thing or two about being at war said:

In the truest sense, freedom cannot be bestowed; it must be achieved.

The Iraqis must achieve it. We cannot want it for them more than they are willing to fight for it themselves. All we are doing by sending more troops to Iraq is feeding an already out-of-control dependence. So I believe we must not only speak out against the escalation, but we should do everything in our power to stop it. We need to convene an international conference, as the Iraq Study Group called for. We need to call for a cease-fire. I haven't heard the word out of the Malaki's lips, "cease-fire." It is his country. His people are killing each other. "Cease-fire" would be a term of art to give people hope that there can be peace. At this international conference, we can look at the long-term solutions. Right now our troops have mission impossible, acting as a police force in the middle of what is, by most accounts, a civil war.

Nowhere in the resolution this Senate voted on authorizing force is it stated our soldiers' mission is being in the middle of a shooting civil war. We ought to ask this President to come back with a new authorization, if that is what he wants to do.

Senator WARNER has said that in the past. He said:

I think we have to examine very carefully what Congress authorized the president to do in the context of a situation, if we're faced with all-out civil war.

Well, that time has come. This President should, A, send a signal that he wants to see us vote on this escalation of his and, B, be willing to come back with a new authorization that says clearly that it is fine for our troops to be in the middle of a civil war. Enough is enough.

Enough is enough. We have to end the paralysis of "stay the course." This is a time of great challenge for the U.S. Congress. I have been very proud these past few weeks to see my colleagues on both sides of the aisle begin to speak out forcefully against this. For me, it is easy to oppose the President on this war because, as I said, I voted against it, as did the occupant of the chair at that time. We didn't have our questions answered. I understand it is harder for others. But I believe everybody—at least a majority of the Senate—wants to vote on this escalation. They want to be heard on behalf of their constituents.

So it is times like these that I recall the words of one of my heroes, the great Martin Luther King, who said:

The ultimate measure of a man [and I suspect he meant woman, also] is not where they stand in the moments of comfort, but where they stand at times of challenge and controversy.

He also said:

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.

Well, this escalation matters. We ought to be heard on it.

I commend my leader, Senator REID, for holding firm on this issue. There ought to be an up-or-down vote on this escalation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, my good friend, the majority leader, and I have been in a discussion over the last few days, going back to last week, over how to go forward on the Iraq debate. As I have indicated to him both privately and publicly, we on this side of the aisle were certainly looking forward to having an Iraq debate this week and are prepared to do so and are ready to go forward.

I think we all agree at this moment that there is no more important issue facing the Nation than the mission and the fate of the American service men and women in Iraq. This means, of course, that the men and women of this body have no higher duty than to express ourselves openly and honestly on this issue, to take a stand on where we stand. The only truly meaningful tool the Framers gave us to do this was our ability to fund or not fund a war. That is it. This is what Republicans are insisting upon—that the Members of this body express themselves on the question of whether to fund or not to fund the war in Iraq.

I had indicated to my good friend, the majority leader, that I would be propounding another unanimous-consent request at this point, and I will do that now.

I ask unanimous consent that, at a time determined by the majority leader, after consultation with the Republican leader, the Senate proceed en bloc to the following concurrent resolutions under the following agreement: S. Con. Res. 7, the Warner resolution, which is to be discharged from the Foreign Relations Committee; McCain-Lieberman-Graham, regarding benchmarks; Gregg, relating to funding.

I further ask unanimous consent that there be a total of 10 hours of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; provided further that no amendments be in order to any of these measures; further, that at the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to three consecutive votes on the adoption of the concurrent resolutions in the following order, with no further action or intervening action or debate: McCain-Lieberman-Graham, on benchmarks; Gregg, on funding and supporting our troops; S. Con. Res. 7, the Warner resolution.

Finally, I ask unanimous consent that any resolution that does not receive 60 votes in the affirmative, the vote on adoption be vitiated and the concurrent resolution be returned to its previous status.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Madam President, reserving the right to object, this is basically

the same thing that has been asked before. The issue before the American people is whether the President of the United States, on his own, should be able to send 48,000 American soldiers to Iraq, costing approximately \$30 billion extra.

The Republicans can run, as I said yesterday, but they cannot hide. That is the issue before the American people. We all support the troops, and we have fought very hard, in spite of our misgivings about this war, to make sure they have everything they have needed.

It is interesting that there is a lot of talk about the Gregg amendment. But if you look at the Gregg amendment and at page 2—the last paragraph on page 2 of his amendment—and you look in the Warner amendment on page 3, paragraph 4, it is identical language. Warner has encapsulated within his amendment what Gregg wanted, which is the so-called “resolve clause.”

This is all a game to divert attention from the fact that we have before us now an issue that the American people want us to address: whether there should be a surge, an escalation, an augmentation of the already disastrous war taking place in Iraq, causing 3,100 American deaths, approximately; 24,000 wounded American soldiers, a third of whom are hurt very badly; 2,000 are missing multiple limbs—brain injuries, blindness, paralysis. That is what 8,000 American soldiers now are going through—men and women.

So I ask my friend to amend his request in the following manner:

I ask unanimous consent that the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Con. Res. 7, by Senator WARNER, and S. Res. 70, by Senator MCCAIN, and the Senate proceed to their consideration en bloc; that there be 6 hours for debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees on both resolutions, to be debated concurrently; that no amendments or motions be in order to either resolution; that at the conclusion or yielding back of the time, the Senate vote on Senator MCCAIN’s resolution, followed by a vote on Senator WARNER’s resolution; that if either resolution fails to garner 60 votes, the vote be vitiated and the resolution be returned to its prior status; that immediately following the votes on the resolutions I have just mentioned, the Senate turn to the consideration of H.J. Res. 20, the infamous continuing resolution, funding the Government after February 15 for the rest of the fiscal year; that there be 4 hours for debate on the joint resolution; that no amendments or motions be in order in relation to it; that at the conclusion or yielding back of the time, the Senate vote on final passage of the joint resolution; that if the joint resolution fails to get 60 votes, the vote be vitiated and the joint resolution be returned to the calendar.

I announce that if we are able to do that—dispose of these three items I

have mentioned—this week, or whenever we finish them, then we would begin the Presidents Day recess at the conclusion of this week. One of the things we found is that because of the accelerated work schedule, people are having a lot of work to do at home. So that is why we would do this.

Madam President, there would be no amendments to the CR from either side. I mention that because, in getting to the point where we are, there has been total consultation by the majority and minority, each subcommittee, and the majority and ranking members. The chair and ranking members work very closely. One of the people heavily involved in this, for example, is Senator DOMENICI, my long-term partner on the Energy and Water Subcommittee on Appropriations. He fought for more, and he got more. That happened with many Republicans who spoke out, and most of them did.

I further say that if there were ever a bipartisan measure, it is the continuing resolution. But we have to finish before February 15.

So I ask my friend, the Republican leader, to accept my alteration to his unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the request?

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, reserving the right to object, and I will object, let me remind our colleagues that 4 years ago last month, we were at exactly the same situation. My party came back to the majority. The Democratic majority of the previous Congress had not passed 11 out of the 13 appropriations bills. And what did the new Republican majority do? We took up an omnibus collection of appropriations bills. We had over 100 amendments offered. We gave everybody in the Senate an opportunity to offer amendments, and we disposed of all of those appropriations bills over a couple-week period.

What my good friend, the majority leader, is suggesting is that we take up a continuing resolution of 11 appropriations bills, with no amendments whatsoever, and he offers as an enticement an extra week off. This is completely unacceptable to the minority. First, he is saying that we cannot get adequate consideration to our Iraq proposals. Second, he is saying we cannot have any amendments to an over \$400 billion continuing appropriation. Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I will continue reserving the right to object to my friend’s unanimous consent request. Prior to making a decision on that, I want to read to everybody here from page 3, paragraph 4, of the Warner resolution:

The Congress should not take any action that will endanger United States military forces in the field, including the elimination or reduction of funds for troops in the field, as such an action with respect to funding would undermine their safety or harm their