$500 billion. In fact, we learned yesterday that the United States had shipped money to Mr. Bremer, Ambassador Bremer, to disburse money to Iraqi ministries. How much money? It was 363 tons of money in hundred-dollar bills—363 tons. There is some dispute as to how many hundred-dollar bills it takes to make 363 tons, and they really don't know exactly how much money that is, but it is around $12 billion, most of which is not accounted for. I guess $12 billion, when you compare it to $500 billion, is not very much, but I think the American people understand that 363 tons of cash, hundred-dollar bills, is a lot of money.

We also know from reading the morning paper that the Associated Press reports:

More Americans have been killed in combat in Iraq over the last 4 months than in any comparable stretch since the war began.

To say the war isn't going well is an understatement. To say there is a civil war going on in Iraq is an understatement. I really think it is unfortunate that we have been unable to vote on whether the surge should take place. Senators have not been allowed to cast their vote on this issue, and because of that, we are going to move on to the continuing resolution this afternoon—late this evening, I should say, after we finish these two important Executive Calendar matters.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

INSIST ON A FAIR PROCESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Listening to my good friend, the majority leader, should remind us all that the debate we had anticipated having this week—and I might say Members on our side were certainly prepared to have the debate—would not have had any impact on the surge. These were nonbinding resolutions. I would not argue that they were not significant, because Senators would have been put on record. But we were certainly prepared for the debate. What we were not prepared to do is to have a process that denied our side other options in addition to the Levin proposal.

As we were frequently reminded last year by Democratic Senators, the Senate is different from the House. In the Senate, a minority of at least 41 can insist on a process that is fair.

Senate Republicans were united, including members of our conference who support the Levin proposal, in insisting on a fair process. We started out with five different options, gradually pared them down to two—the McCain-Lieberman-Graham proposal and the Gregg proposal relating to supporting the troops. My good friend, the majority leader, objected to allowing us to have two proposals. He only wanted us to have one proposal. So we narrowed it down to one and picked the Gregg ''support the troops'' proposal as our one, and the majority leader objected to that unanimous consent request as well, leading us to believe that not only did he want us to limit ourselves to one, he wanted to pick which one. Of course, in the Senate, that is just not possible. This is a deliberative body. It insists on having votes on a wide variety of proposals. Certainly, when we were in the majority last year, we had to vote on a lot of things we might not have liked to have voted on in order to advance a particular proposal. That is the way the Senate works.

At whatever point the majority would like to begin the debate again on Iraq, we will certainly be happy to have it. I particularly wish to thank Senator GREGG for his very important contribution to this debate. That is a vote we will have at some point, on some measure, when we return to the subject of Iraq.

With regard to the continuing resolution, let me just say to the majority leader, he has suggested that I survey our members and see what amendments we might like to offer, since he has indicated amendments may or may not be allowed on that proposal. I would say to him we are paring that down and hope to be able to get him—we have about seven; we are going to try to pare that down to three, submit those amendments to the majority leader, and hope they might be allowed when we do move to the continuing resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say to my friend, we would also see what amendments, if any, we want to offer on this side—maybe three and three or whatever we can come up with that appears to move the ball along.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip is recognized.

RESOLUTIONS PROCEDURE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I was pleased to hear just a moment ago the suggestion that maybe we go to the Omnibus appropriations bill in such a way that would allow some amendments to be offered on both sides. That is good. That is the way it ought to be. That is why I have been surprised and, frankly, disappointed that we have not been able to come to some sort of agreement about how to proceed to these resolutions dealing with the President's plan to take action in Iraq and have a full debate on the substance.

Of the plan and the resolutions, I don't think there is any excuse for the fact that we have come to the point where we are throwing up our hands and saying: I can't have it my way, you can't have it your way, therefore, we will have it no way.

If this were the Super Bowl, whether you were Grossman or Manning, you would call a time out and say, wait a minute here, there has got to be a way we can get a plan to go forward. I know how difficult it is to do this because our leaders on both sides of the aisle get pressured from all sides. They are pulled. Don't agree to that, you have to agree to that.

In the end, the leaders have to decide how we go forward in a fair and an open way, and the rest of us have to support that decision. The majority has strong power in the House of Representatives, and a good bit in the Senate. But I think the most difficult job in the city is the job of being majority leader, the job that Senator REID has right now because he doesn't have a Rules Committee. He is not the President. He can't give an order and have the bureaucracy move, not that the bureaucracy ever moves. He has to work with the minority. He has to find a way to move things forward.

Some people say: Oh, that is the process. Look, the process is substance because if you can't figure out how to get it done, you never get to the substance. This is not an autocracy. No one person possesses unlimited power. You have got to give to get a little. You can't have a deal where you say: No, no, you can't offer but one amendment; and, by the way, it has to be this.

If we were going to do anything, we should have gone with more, not less. So I don't get it. If this is the big, important, serious issue we all say it is, surely we could have worked out a way to proceed. Well, I guess the one thing we could say is, we will get back to this. We are going to get back to it in many different ways. But at least in the future, when we get to the debate, it is going to be a serious debate about something that is real.

We were talking about taking up resolutions that had no binding effect. It was a feel-good deal. Yeah, we are going to take a pop at the President. Yeah, we support the troops, but no, we don't support the troops.

Oh, yes, thank you very much, General Petraeus, 81 to nothing, you are confirmed. Go over to Iraq. Oh, and by the way, we don't agree with what you are going to try to do. We don't support the plan. How did we get into that?

At least at some point, men and women of strong principle and beliefs are going to offer up amendments that are going to say: Support the troops, stick with the plan or pull out. High tail it out. Get out of there now. And then we will have a real debate and we will have real votes. That is what, under our Constitution, we should be doing, actually.

I think the proposal that Senator GREGG had, made eminent good sense. Let's show we support the troops. Gee whiz, why is that a bad idea? The American people don't want to send our troops into harm's way around the world or even in Baghdad without knowing we are behind them.

So what is the problem? The problem is that it was able to get 80, I don't

know, or 90 votes. We can't have that vote because later on we may want to actually cut off the funds to the troops. There are some little, bitty twists of language, too, such as we support funding for the troops in the field. What does that mean, ''in the field''? What if you are on the way? What if you are in a brigade that is pulling out of Texas now or pulling out of Kentucky or that has landed in Kuwait? We don't support them. There are too many nuances.

Let me get away from process and talk about substance. We have a problem in Iraq. A lot of people now have shifted their position and are saying: Well, I voted for it earlier, but I am against it now. Yeah, it has gotten tough, so I don't like it.

Everybody says change the status quo. I had a chance to talk to some world leaders recently in Switzerland and they were saying: My goodness, you can't do that, can't do this, can't do something else.

I said: Here is the choice: Stay, leave or do what?

They said: No, you can't leave. You have to stay. Well, what do you propose? Deafening silence. The President understood we had to change the status quo. Action had to be taken. A plan had to be developed. He proposed a plan. He met with us. He came to the Congress. He spoke at the State of the Union: Here is what I propose to do. Give this plan a chance. Give the plan a chance.

And General Petraeus, maybe the General Grant of this war, or the General Washington of a previous war—this is the man of the hour, and I hope and pray the good Lord will guide him in the right way because he has a serious challenge before him.

But this is not just about a surge, although that is a part of the plan. This is a plan with at least three other key components. But ask yourself, we say to the Iraqis: You have to get a political solution. Everybody is saying: No, we will never get a military solution without a political and economic solution.

Well, yeah. But how do you get a political solution in chaos? How can you get a political solution when your capital is being blown up every day by insurgents of all stripes? You have got to get a grip on security. It is similar to here in our Nation's Capital. We couldn't have orderly Government if we didn't have order. So we are going to try to send in the best we have, under the best general we have, and get some control of the violence and the chaos in Baghdad and then give the Iraqis a chance to deal with the politics.

Am I convinced all of this is going to work? I don't know. I am not the best expert in the world. I have been on the Armed Services Committee, I have been on Intelligence. I have been around awhile. But I am not going to impose my military judgment on a man such as General Petraeus. But let's see if the politics will not work. There is a lot of pressure. They know, they know.

I met with the Vice President of Iraq recently and he was talking about: Well, what is your strategic plan? I said: No, sir. Excuse me. With all due respect, it is not about what is our plan. What is your plan? It is your country, your Government. When are you going to ante up and kick in, in a way that brings leadership and order out of all of this?

So the second part of the President's plan is for different rules of engagement. It is for a requirement that some political achievements be reached. That is why I like the McCain-Lieberman-Graham proposal. I like benchmarks. So the question is: It is one thing to lay down benchmarks, but what if they don't meet them? Then, you decide. If we conclude it would not work, that they can't govern themselves, then we have to go with the next plan. Somebody said: Well, this is the last plan. It is never the last plan. There is always another plan.

But the politics, I think, we can be successful. We certainly have to try. I do think that regional solutions—getting particular provinces under control or particular sectors under control, getting generals in for different sectors—makes good sense. But also the economy. Look at America where you have people who are not working. Their life is insecure. They get into trouble. I understand that 40 percent of the young men in Baghdad don't have a job. There has to be a better job done of getting the money—the oil money—fairly distributed and done in an economic way that will create jobs so that these young men and women will not be bored and looking for ways to kill themselves.

Mr. President, we should have found a way to go forward with this debate. I don't quite understand what is going on. Maybe we are all having to learn a little different roles of who is in the majority and who is in the minority and how it works. I know for sure that in some respects it is easier to be in the minority than to in the majority.

The majority leader has to be—he has to be tough. He has to eat a little crow every now and then. He has to be prepared to say to the Republicans: We will find a way to work this out. You have to keep poking at it. Somehow or another, we didn't want to do it this time. I don't know. Maybe everybody is going to leave the field and say we won. This is not about winning or losing. This shouldn't be about the political winner or who won the PR battle.

We are playing with lives. America's finest. I think we should support them, as Senator GREGG proposes. We need to give the plan the President has developed a chance because nobody else has come up with a better plan, other than pull back at the borders. What good is that? Which way are we going to shoot? To me, that is the worst of all worlds.

We can make this work, but the President, General Petraeus, our troops, the American people need our support and our confidence in what we are attempting.

We can go on and have the debate today about these nominees—two good men. We can turn to the omnibus appropriations and find a way to get it done with order.

Nobody wants to play games. Nobody should be trying to say: Oh, if you don't do it this way, or my way, you are trying to shut down the Government. Nobody should be saying we are going to filibuster if we don't get everything we want.

This is the Senate. You have got to give everybody their chances. You have to have some order out of the chaos. This is sort of similar to Baghdad. Sometimes we get divided up into provinces. I appreciate the efforts that have been made, but the important thing is not the process in the Senate. The important thing is what our men and women are going to be trying to do in Iraq. Let's give this plan a chance.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I appreciate the advice and counsel of my friend from Mississippi. He certainly has the experience to offer suggestions, having served in various capacities in leadership. I have been with him. He is a pleasant man to work with, and I like him very much. But I would suggest, this morning, that we not use Super Bowl terminology and Manning and Grossman because I think, if we do that, we would find we would have a lot of objection if suddenly we looked around and Grossman was using a baseball or basketball rather than a football. I think what they have tried to do is change the rules in the middle of the game, and they are playing around with this procedural argument.

I have to acknowledge to my friend from Mississippi that the people over there who are trying to make the President not look bad had a little victory because they have been able to stall and stall. As a result of that, soldiers are being shipped, as we speak, without the Senate having to take a vote on whether that surge should take place. So in that respect, their stalling has probably benefited the President.

As far as process, we have worked through the ethics bill, the minimum wage bill, and even though there were cloture motions filed and cloture not invoked, finally, we were able to get those things passed. But I think debate on the surge would have been very important. We have been denied that. I understand the rules of the Senate.

My friend from Mississippi also says we should be doing something that is real. I tried to talk about something real this morning. More American troops were killed in combat in Iraq over the past 4 months than in any comparable stretch since the war began—334 dead American soldiers,

men and women, with mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters and husbands and wives.

I think over the last few days, though, there has been a deafening silence, and people standing here and saying what the President is doing is the right thing to do, because it hasn't been the right thing to do, what the President has been doing, and he wants to continue more of the same.

I understand we are now at a point where we are going to talk about a couple of important nominations. We are going to try to get our fiscal house in order, which is not in order, because unless we do something by February 15, basically the Government closes. This is very unusual. I have spoken with the distinguished Republican leader, and one thing we are going to work on together this year, once we get out of this situation with the continuing resolution, is to work together to try to pass appropriations bills. That is good for the institution and good for the country. We are going to try to do that. It may require some late nights and long weeks, but we are going to do that. We have 13 appropriations bills, and we are going to work very hard to get them passed.

So I am terribly disappointed we haven't had the opportunity to vote on Senator WARNER's and Senator LEVIN's resolution, and on the McCain resolution, but we have heard enough about that. We are not going to be able to do that, and we will move on to other things.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Briefly, it is hard for me to remember how many times we were told by the other side last year that you come to the Senate to cast tough votes, but I don't think Senator GREGG's vote was a tough vote. Why would it be a tough vote to vote on supporting the troops? To me, that is an easy vote. We all will be forced, because of the process in the Senate, to cast votes we don't like. If you are in the majority, you get more of those than when you are in the minority. I can't imagine being, in effect, afraid of voting on the Gregg amendment to support the troops. That would be one of the easiest votes we ever cast around here.

Let me conclude by saying I am disappointed, as other members of my party in the Senate are disappointed, we are not having the Iraq debate this week. The distinguished minority whip, in his remarks, summed it up quite well. We will continue to talk about this important subject. There is no more important subject in the country right now. I know we will be debating other proposals in the coming months.

Mr. GREGG. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield.

Mr. GREGG. I was just wondering if the Republican leader, and I ask this question through the Chair, believes that the Democratic leader is correct in his characterization that we have stopped this in a procedural manner. Is it not true that the Democratic leader controls the procedure as to whether there would be a vote? And is it not true, also, that we agreed to the Democratic leader's request that we offer only one amendment but that we just ask we be able to choose our amendment, and they be able to choose their amendment?

Mr. MCCONNELL. The Senator is entirely correct. We kept paring down the options that we wanted to offer in the course of this debate on the most important issue in the country. And at the end, as the Senator from New Hampshire just suggested, we were down to two: one that the majority leader and most of his party favor—and some of ours—and the amendment of the Senator from New Hampshire in support of the troops.

Apparently, the majority wanted to tell us which amendment we would offer.

Mr. GREGG. I thank the Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I thank the Senator from New Hampshire.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business until 2 p.m. with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, alternating sides when appropriate, with the first 30 minutes under the control of the minority, the second 30 minutes under the control of the majority, during which the Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER, and the Senator from Massachusetts, Mr. KENNEDY, be recognized for 15 minutes each.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

IRAQ

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I want to, once again, state the situation. It has been very well stated by the Republican leader. The simple fact is, we, as members of the minority, requested the right to offer an alternative to the proposal of the majority. That is not an unusual event in the Senate. In fact, it is the purpose of the Senate to debate different approaches.

What we asked as an alternative was very simple, straight forward language. Let me read it again. It simply stated:

It is the sense of the Congress that Congress should not take any action that will endanger the United States military forces in the field, including the elimination or reduction of funds for troops in the field, as such action with respect to funding would undermine the safety or harm their effectiveness in pursuing their assigned missions.

All this language says is that whether you agree with the President or whether you disagree with the President, whether you support a commitment of more troops or you don't support a commitment of more troops, once the troops are on the ground in the fight, we are going to give them the financial support, the logistical support, the equipment that they need in order to protect themselves and pursue their mission effectively.

Members do not have to support the President to support this language. It is not designed to state the President is right or the President is wrong. It is simply language designed to say that an American soldier deserves the support of the Congress of the United States. That is an elementary responsibility of this Senate.

The fact that the Democratic leadership will not allow Members to vote on this simple statement of support for American troops is a transgression on the purposes of the Senate, which is to express itself relative to the actions of our soldiers in the field and how we will support them.

It is literally impossible to address the debate on Iraq without addressing the most fundamental issue, which is whether our troops are going to be supported when they are asked to defend us in the field. The idea that we can decouple the support for the troops from the issue of policy is absurd on its face, and the position of the Democratic leadership that we should not address the issue of supporting the troops when we address the issue of whether the tactics being pursued by the military commanders in the field are correct—which doesn't happen to be the responsibility of Congress; that is the responsibility of the commanders—is by nature inconceivable, inconsistent, and simply not defensive.

In fact, it is so absurd on its face that I would simply quote the national commander of the American Legion, Mr. Paul Morin, who says:

We will not separate the war from the warrior.

That is what this is about: whether the Democratic leadership takes the truly indefensible position that in a debate on the issue of Iraq, we do not discuss the support for the person we are asking to go out and defend this Nation.

What this really comes down to is very simple. This resolution would have received broad bipartisan support in this Senate. That is because there are very few Members in this Senate—I would guess virtually none—who don't believe that our obligation as a Senate, as a legislative body which funds the military, that our obligation is to give the soldiers in the field what they need in order to defend themselves and carry out their mission.

So rather than have a vote on our amendment which would have received a large majority in this Senate—much