come out of the money that is allocated for the State of Texas, are just extraordinarily unwise.

I have heard rumors to the effect that the majority is going to try to add this money back in the supplemental appropriations bill we will be taking up, I guess sometime in March. Of course, that would be a budgetary trick which would exacerbate the budget deficit and be in stark conflict with the kind of rhetoric we have heard from our colleagues on the majority side who have said that we need a pay-as-you-go budget. In other words, if there is going to be spending, there has to be commensurate offsets.

Cutting out of this so-called continuing resolution or Omnibus appropriations this $3.1 billion for our military families and then coming back and adding it in as emergency spending in a supplemental avoids the budgetary requirement of an offset and, thus, will add to additional deficits which are irresponsible and certainly in conflict with the statements our colleagues have made on the other side.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Would the Senator from Texas yield for a question?

Mr. CORNYN. I certainly will.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I was just listening to his statement and agree that there is going to be a budget gimmick if this comes up in a supplemental. But is the Senator from Texas a part of an amendment we would like to proffer which would restore $39.1 billion but cut .73 percent across the board in all of the other accounts in this bill except for defense, veterans, and homeland security, so that we could pay for it, be fiscally responsible, and yet do what we need to do for the Active-Duty military, not to drain their operations to fund military construction projects that should be funded in this bill? Is the Senator aware of that?

Mr. CORNYN. I am proud to be a cosponsor, along with the distinguished senior Senator from Texas, of an amendment which would accomplish that goal. This is the way to handle our budgetary responsibilities appropriately. I implore the majority leader to allow us an opportunity to have amendments and to have a full and fair debate on this continuing resolution. We started this Congress in a spirit of compromise, but certainly if the amendment tree is filled and we are denied an opportunity to have debate and consideration of an amendment such as that, it would be extraordinarily disappointing and in conflict with some of the early rhetoric and hopes we all had for bipartisan cooperation.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF GENERAL GEORGE W. CASEY, JR., TO BE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of Calendar No. 15, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of General George W. Casey, Jr., to be Chief of Staff, United States Army.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 50 minutes for debate, with the time equally divided and controlled by the senior Senator from Michigan, Mr. LEVIN, and the senior Senator from Arizona, Mr. MCCAIN, or their designees, and 10 minutes for each of the leaders.

The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, may I inquire, how much time do I have again?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 50 minutes total. The Senator from Arizona gets 15 minutes and 15 minutes for the Senator from Michigan, and the leaders have 10 minutes each.

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank the Chair.

I ask the clerk to tell me when I have consumed 8 minutes.

I come again this morning to the not particularly pleasant task of opposing the nomination of General Casey to be Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army. I preface my remarks, again, with my appreciation for honorable service to the country, his family, and the sacrifices they have made for many years. This isn't a question of character because his character is outstanding; it is a question of judgment.

I will try to put this in context, why I am in opposition. For several years, I and a number of others have bemoaned and complained and criticized and been saddened as we have watched this train wreck in Iraq. Not long after the initial invasion, I came back from a visit to Iraq and visited with the then-Secretary of Defense, who bears great responsibility for this debacle, and history will judge him very badly for his performance as Secretary of Defense. I told him how it was that we were not going to win, we were not going to succeed, that we didn't have enough troops over there, that Anbar Province was going to erupt—basically all the things many of us saw were going to transpire. General Casey, for 2½ years up until recently, would come back to the Congress and say that things were going well. I quoted many quotes yesterday, from time to time, including in 2005, saying we could start withdrawing by 2006 and on and on and on, completely divorced from reality on the ground, as was the Secretary of Defense.

I will state at the beginning that Presidents are responsible, but Presidents also rely on the advice and counsel of their military leaders. That is a normal thing and has happened in every conflict.

President Bush said time and time again: I have said to the American people, as Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. But I have also said our commanders on the ground will make that decision. We will talk to General Casey. On and on. The Army is getting on its feet. We have turned over a lot of territory to the Army. They are good fighters. I have spent a great deal of time with General Abizaid and General Casey. They are in Washington. They are generals who will be happy to tell me the way it is, not the way they think I would like to it be.

Time after time, it has been clear that the President of the United States, as appropriate, has been relying on the advice and counsel of commanders in the field who did not give him appropriate information or recommendations. We are all responsible. In the military, you are responsible for the decisions you make on the battlefield, particularly when they cost our most valuable and important asset—American blood.

In his opening statement at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on September 29, General Casey said: ''The capacity of Iraqi security forces has increased quantitatively and qualitatively over the past year'' and ''we have also developed with the Iraqis a readiness reporting system, not unlike the one we have in place for our own forces. So over the past 18 months we have built enough Iraqi capacity where we can begin talking seriously about transitioning this counterinsurgency mission to them.''

Did he realize at the time that statement was wrong? And when did he tell someone?

At the same hearing, General Casey said:

> More coalition is not necessarily better. More and more capable Iraqi security forces are better. Increased coalition presence speeds the notion of occupation. It contributes to the dependency of Iraqi security forces on the coalition. It extends the amount of time it will take for Iraqi security forces to become self-reliant and exposes more coalition forces to attacks at a time when Iraqi security forces are increasingly available and increasingly capable.

There has been no sign of that. Why did it take 15 months for General Casey to change that assessment and then not even agree with the new strategy of five additional brigades, which most of us pray is enough and most of us believe is a direct contravention to the Powell doctrine, which is, use overwhelming force in order to gain military victory?

President Bush said General Casey will make decisions as to how many troops we have there. Why did it take 2½ years? Why did it have to take 2½ years of steady degradation for General Casey to figure out we didn't have enough troops there, and the situation is worsening in Iraq.

The NIE that came out yesterday should frighten anyone, any American,

because of the stark depiction in the NIE—the public document—that states that the situation is grave and deteriorating in Iraq, which is also the conclusion of the Iraq Study Group, whether you happen to agree with their recommendations or not.

Mr. President, responsibility is one of the first things that is taught at our service academies. We are responsible for our decisions. When the Missouri runs aground, we relieve the captain. When four sailors are washed overboard, we relieve the captain. Now we are rewarding failure as we did during the Vietnam war when we named General Westmoreland as Chief of Staff of the Army after a failed search and destroy. There are eerie parallels here. General Westmoreland employed the search and destroy strategy which is counter to any counterinsurgency strategy. That kind of strategy is clear, hold, and build. That is what General Petraeus is trying to do now. That is not what has been done in the past under General Casey.

So what are we doing? We are promoting a general who has pursued a failed policy, advocated it to the President, whom he is responsible to advise, and he is advocating it to the Congress of the United States despite the overwhelming view by many of us that it was not a successful strategy. Still, today, where he will be in place if he is confirmed by the Senate, he will be responsible for the operation, training, and doctrine that will be employed in Iraq, and he still, to this day, as far as I know, from the hearing of a short time ago, believes—and I could give the quote—that we are not failing but we are succeeding. I don't know of anyone who believes that who is in a responsible position in Government.

Mr. President, it is with a bit of regret that I do this. Again, I repeat what I said yesterday. Senator LEVIN asked him:

I am wondering whether you would agree that what we are doing in Iraq was maybe a slow failure.

General Casey said:

I don't actually see it as a slow failure. I actually see it as slow progress.

How could you depict the situation in Baghdad today, with six helicopters being shot down in the last few weeks, with a spike in casualties that has taken place, and the continued level of sectarian violence, as a slow progress?

So I want to tell my friends that people in the military, particularly our young officers, are watching what we do here. We teach them in our service schools, and we teach our noncommissioned officers and junior officers: You are responsible for success or failure. That is why we appoint you as leaders. In this case, this leader, despite his honorable character and dedication to this country, has not led, and his responsibility has not been carried out.

So I hope my colleagues will turn down this nomination and that we will appoint one of the many highly qualified senior military officers we have to fulfill this position.

May I finally say that I am very nervous about this new strategy. I am very doubtful that we have enough troops. I don't know if the Maliki government will be strong enough. But if General Casey is appointed to this position, my confidence will be lowered because it is not appropriate to put someone who does not support wholeheartedly the new strategy in a position where he will be responsible for a great deal of it. To this day, he doesn't admit that this present strategy has failed.

Do I have any time remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 5½ minutes.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan is recognized.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, again, it is extraordinarily ironic that my good friend from Arizona says there is no one in a high position in this Government who thinks we are succeeding, when the President, just 2 or 3 months ago, said we are absolutely winning in Iraq. That is the Commander in Chief—a pretty high position of responsibility. The Vice President, just last year, said that the insurgency is in its last throes, when it was not. So it was clear to everybody, and apparently to my good friend from Arizona because he says he had seen this for years—failure after failure in Iraq—identified by the highest levels and the highest level of this administration as being a success.

Year after year, we were told this is a successful strategy. Now all of a sudden, a general who was assigned to carry out that strategy and did the best he could, acknowledging some mistakes in implementation, is going to be held accountable by some who will vote against his nomination for the massive failures at the highest levels of civilian authority. The strategy was wrong going into Iraq; it was poorly implemented. The Iraqi Army was disbanded. That was not General Casey; that was before he came.

The people who made those decisions were given awards and medals by the administration. George Tenet was given a medal for his work. He said the intelligence was a slam-dunk, that there were weapons of mass destruction. Medal after medal was given to the civilian leaders. A Medal of Freedom was awarded to George Tenet. Ambassador Bremer was given a medal. He just disbanded the Iraqi Army and had a debaathification program, which was a complete failure because of its excess. He was given a Medal of Freedom.

William Haynes, General Counsel of the Department of Defense—his dubious legal judgment contributed to the interrogation abuses of detainees that led to the horrors of Abu Ghraib. He was given the Department of Defense medal for distinguished public service.

Under Secretary of Defense Doug Feith, who hyped false intelligence used to justify the war in Iraq, was given a medal.

Now you have a general who was given a strategy and was told to implement the strategy. Yes, he was optimistic that it could work. He is in charge of the morale of his troops. Now, suddenly, some say he should be, in effect, punished. He should carry the burdens that properly should be carried by the top civilian leaders of this Nation. It is not appropriate.

It is not fair that General Casey be held responsible for massive failures that were caused by the wrong policies, the deceptions, the ignorance, the arrogance, and the cockiness of civilian leaders in this administration. It is just plain wrong that this all be heaped onto his back.

What do we know about General Casey? By the way, we know he is forthright and acknowledges his mistakes. There is not a commander I know of who does not acknowledge his mistakes. Every commander worth his or her salt acknowledges mistakes, and General Casey has done that. In fact, he has given us a list of mistakes. We asked him what went wrong that you contributed to, and he gave us a list very openly. But you cannot lay the chaos and the violence in Iraq on General Casey's doorstep. This belongs on the doorstep of the top civilian leaders of this country who went into Iraq the way they did, who didn't plan for an aftermath, who disbanded the Iraqi army, and who perpetrated some of the other mistakes that have put us in some of the positions that we are in, in Iraq.

General Casey is a long and distinguished servant in the military, including the position of Vice Chief of Staff of the Army. This was preceded by assignments on the joint staff and a career commanding Infantry units at all levels, up to and including Division Command. He knows Iraq, he knows the challenges the Army faces in Iraq, he knows the Pentagon, and he knows the challenges he will be facing in the Pentagon if we confirm him. He has the knowledge and skills to carry out his primary responsibility as Chief of Staff, which is the training and equipping of soldiers, caring for them and their families.

I want to discuss two issues that have been raised. One is the general's decision to support an increase in U.S. forces in Iraq after previously opposing such an increase, and also the proposition that General Casey somehow or other should be denied this position because of mistakes that he may have made in Iraq.

First, the issue of additional troops. I pressed General Casey about this issue at his nomination hearing before the Armed Services Committee. He said his general view was that he agreed with General Abizaid's view that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future. That is something, it seems to me, that is key to those of us who oppose this surge. That goes to the heart of our argument—the fact that General Casey

believed more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future.

So how is it that now General Casey supports the surge? That is the question I asked him:

Senator LEVIN: We asked General Abizaid back in November when he appeared before this committee whether we needed more troops or he supported more troops going to Iraq. And this is just last November. And this is what he said. He said that he met with every divisional commander, General Casey, the Corps commander, General Dempsey. ''We all talked together, and I said, 'In your professional opinion, if you were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq?' And they all said no. And the reason is because we want Iraqis to do more. It's easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do this work. I believe that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future.''

I asked General Casey:

Now, General Abizaid said that he spoke to you and that his opinion reflected your opinion and all the other commanders. Was that true when he said that?

General Casey: I'm not exactly sure when in November it was, but it was.

Senator LEVIN: So you've changed your view since November?

General Casey: As I described in my opening testimony, Senator, in mid-November was when the reevaluation of the plan was taking place. So I suspect John and I talked before that. And that does reflect my general view on additional U.S. forces in Iraq.

Senator LEVIN: It reflects a general view, but then there was some kind of reevaluation which took place in mid-November.

General Casey: That's right, Senator. We're constantly reevaluating how we're doing and what we need.

Senator LEVIN: But that position that General Abizaid stated was your position when you spoke to him in early November presumably still remains your general view.

General Casey: That's correct.

Senator LEVIN: Well, if that's your general view, what is the change? Why are you modifying your general view for this surge?

General Casey: What has changed, Senator, are several things. One, the development of a plan, a new plan that was conceived by the Iraqis and worked in concert with us; so there is a plan that laid out requirements for those forces. So just to say do you need more forces is one thing; to say do you need more forces to execute this plan is quite another. And we do need an additional two brigades to implement that plan.

Now, there is a new plan, a plan that I very strongly disagree with, the surge plan of the President. It is a new plan given to the commanders, and they are now told, with this new plan, to insert troops into neighborhoods of Iraq, hold that territory, and have more American troops—many more—embedded with Iraqi forces. That is the plan. That is the Commander in Chief's decision.

Will that require more troops? And now General Casey gives his honest answer that it will require, in his judgment, two additional brigades.

General Abizaid says it will require more brigades, but General Casey said two. I give him credit for giving his honest opinion.

So what has changed? He still believes in general that putting more troops in there takes the Iraqis off the hook, but if you change your plan, you change your mission and you say, as the Commander in Chief has, that is now our mission, that is what we are going to do, it is obviously up to the commanders to say how many additional troops it would take to carry out that mission.

That is an honest response, and that is the response we expect of our leaders. But his general view has been correct, and so has General Abizaid's. More American troops is a mistake. It takes the Iraqis off the hook. It lessens the responsibility on them to do what only they can do with their military and with their political leaders.

People who have visited General Casey in Iraq—colleagues—have always found him to be honest about the situation in Iraq and true to the pledge that he would give Congress his personal views, even if those views differ from the administration in power. And he did this again at his nomination hearing when he disagreed with the Commander in Chief's sudden epiphany that things are not going well in Iraq.

All of a sudden, now the Commander in Chief says we are on the road to slow failure. That is a new revelation. Until a few months ago, the Commander in Chief was telling the American people we are absolutely winning in Iraq. So now I pressed General Casey about that:

Do you agree with the President that now the situation in Iraq is maybe a slow failure?

He said:

I actually don't see it as a slow failure. I actually see it as slow progress.

Do I agree with his assessment? I do not. I have seen chaos in Iraq—consistent chaos, growing chaos. But do I admire an honest answer even when it disagrees with the Commander in Chief? I do. Even though I disagree with that answer, I think it was an honest answer that he gave to the committee.

What about denying him confirmation as Chief of Staff because of the mistakes he may have made? Again, I think this is an ironic argument given the fact that the architects of these policies, the architects of the major failures which led to the mess General Casey was assigned to clean up, are given medals—Medals of Freedom, medals by the Defense Department. They are given the medals, and now some will want to lay on General Casey's doorstep the mess that was not created by his policies but by the policies of others.

I want to read for the RECORD a statement of Senator JIM WEBB on the Casey nomination. He is tied up in a hearing, and so I will read this very brief statement into the RECORD for Senator WEBB:

Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of GEN George Casey, Jr.'s, nomination as the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army. General Casey's service to the Nation during a long career and his experiences in Iraq qualify him well to address the formidable challenges facing the U.S. Army today.

Questions have been raised regarding General Casey's tenure as commander of the Multinational Force-Iraq. The national strategy in Iraq was flawed even before the invasion, and attacks on General Casey's performance only divert attention from the true architects of that strategy.

The situation faced by General Casey in Iraq represents the classic conundrum of military service at the highest level of command. In this administration, it has not been unheard of for some officers who spoke too loudly, very often, to have lost their jobs. At the same time, to speak too softly often causes the military leader, rather than the civilian boss, to be blamed when things go wrong. While I believe strongly that military leaders should be held accountable, General Casey performed as well as one could expect given the strategy for the war's direction that he inherited when he reported to Baghdad.

I wonder, Mr. President, if there is any time remaining.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan has 25 seconds remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

This is the conclusion of Senator WEBB's statement:

The consequences of a failed U.S. national strategy should be raised at a far higher level than General Casey's in Iraq.

Mr. President, I urge my esteemed colleagues to support General Casey's nomination to be the next Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask the two managers, is it possible that the Senator from Virginia could get 2, 3 minutes at most to speak?

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Virginia be allowed 3 minutes to speak on this issue, not to be taken from the time remaining.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LEVIN. Reserving the right to object, and I obviously will not object, I apologize to the Senator from Virginia. I didn't realize he was here to speak on the nomination. If he is speaking in favor, I would have reserved some time for him.

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

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, would it be acceptable that I be given 2 minutes to speak after Senator WARNER?

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask further unanimous consent—and I tell my colleagues that I will not seek further unanimous consent after this; I will object to a further unanimous consent request—that an additional 2 minutes be given to the Senator from Alabama to speak on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The unanimous consent request is 3 minutes for the Senator from Virginia and

2 minutes for the Senator from Alabama. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. I thank the Presiding Officer. I thank the two managers of this very important nomination.

Mr. President, I have the deepest respect for my colleague, Senator MCCAIN. We have an association that goes back some 30 years. It is not often we are on different sides of an issue. I wish to respect Senator MCCAIN's evaluation of a military officer. I think probably he is as well qualified as anyone in this Chamber to speak to those critical issues.

I bring a different perspective to this nomination. There is going to be, clearly, a division of thought as to General Casey and his role as the senior officer in charge of our combat missions in Iraq. But I wish to clearly say that throughout the history of the United States, the doctrine is civilian control over the military.

True, we hold accountable, as best we can, those who we feel have not carried out their responsibilities in the best interests of the country. I believe the accountability of General Casey has been spoken to by the general himself. He recognizes mistakes were made, and I think he accepted that level of accountability he, as a military officer, had. But, indeed, it is the civilians above him, if there is greater wrong, who should be held accountable.

Second, I think of the institution of the U.S. Army. The Chief of Staff is the very pinnacle of the military service, and those nominations are exceedingly carefully thought out from the President on down through the Department of Defense before a nomination goes forward.

I was privileged for some many years to serve as the Navy Secretary and witness the careful process that went through selecting a chief of service. I was personally involved in two of those processes for the U.S. Navy. So I say to my colleagues, do take into consideration the differing views of Senator MCCAIN and others eminently qualified to assess this nomination, but I believe this nomination was carefully thought through at all levels. It represents the institution of the U.S. Army, and they have to take pride in their senior Chief of Staff.

I believe that General Casey, when one looks at the entirety of the record, is deserving of the support of colleagues in the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama is recognized.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Arizona for granting me this extra time. He is not required to do so.

I think we have had a problem and a difference of opinion for some time. Senator MCCAIN has been quite open that he is concerned about the troop levels in Iraq not being sufficient. History may well record he is right on that regard, but our policy was different.

General Abizaid, the commander for that region, the Central Command, studied the area throughout his career. He was concerned about too many troops in Iraq from the beginning. General Casey came on after General Abizaid was CENTCOM commander and became the commander in Iraq. He was Vice Chief of Staff of the Army at that time, he was to be gone for 18 months. He ended up being away from his family for 30 months, 2½ years, and he executed the policy as best he could.

He testified that in his view, he didn't want to ask for a single soldier more than he needed to do the job. I don't know what the tension is, but there was a constant tension between the need to have more soldiers and to not take over the entire effort in Iraq.

General Abizaid and General Casey made their recommendations. We followed them. That experience in Iraq, in my view, can only make him better as Chief of Staff.

He was Vice Chief of Staff, lead our forces for 30 months in Iraq, and now he will be Chief of Staff. He was born in an Army hospital. His father was killed in Vietnam. He served 37 years in the Army. His son is a member of the Army.

He should not bear the brunt of a difference of opinion about how we should have conducted the effort in Iraq. He gave his absolute best effort to it. He could not help but have learned a lot in the process. He will be a fine Chief of Staff.

Mr. President, my time is up. I yield the floor.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I voted for GEN George W. Casey, Jr., to be U.S. Army Chief of Staff. While questions have been raised about General Casey's performance as U.S. commander in Iraq, I do not believe the general can be held responsible for the failures of a policy devised at the highest levels of this administration.

But my vote to confirm General Casey does not change my opposition to the President's policies in Iraq. The President has made the wrong judgment about Iraq time and again, first by taking us into war on a fraudulent basis, then by keeping our brave troops in Iraq, and now by sending 21,500 more American troops into harm's way.

The indefinite presence of U.S. military personnel in Iraq will not fix that country's political problems. And as we have seen over the last few years, sending more troops will not provide the stability in Iraq that can only come from a political agreement. Congress must develop the courage to confront this President on what has become one of the greatest foreign policy mistakes in our history.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I would like to recognize the service of General Casey and speak in support of his confirmation as Chief of Staff of the Army.

General Casey has had a long and distinguished career. After his graduation from Georgetown University in 1970, he received his commission and served in the mechanized infantry. During his career, he has commanded the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division and acted as the assistant division commander of the 1st Armored Division. In 1999, General Casey assumed command of the 1st Armored Division. Additionally, General Casey has served as Director of Strategic Plans and Policy at the Pentagon and as Director of the Joint Staff.

As we all know, General Casey has most recently served as the commander of Multi-National Forces—Iraq. As commander of our forces in Iraq, General Casey faced extremely difficult issues everyday.

I believe General Casey to be a good man, and I would like to again congratulate him on his promotion and thank him for his continued service to our country. I look forward to working with him while he serves as Chief of Staff of the Army.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support for the confirmation of General George Casey to become the next Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army.

Let us be clear. Our soldiers are fighting a grueling and dangerous war. They need to know that their leaders will have no higher priority than their safety and well-being. I believe that General Casey will do just that.

He has been on the frontlines of the war in Iraq. As commander of U.S. forces there, he has overseen operations on the ground; he understands our soldiers' basic needs and will take action to keep them fighting safely and effectively.

I believe that in this new position, like GEN Peter Schoomaker before him, he will work hard to ensure that our soldiers have the equipment and support they need to get the job done.

Regrettably, I am concerned that some in this administration and in this Congress have decided to blame General Casey for the worsening situation on the ground. To them I would say that it is simply wrong, and frankly un-American, to hold one soldier responsible for the administration's policy failures in Iraq.

In his book, ''Deriliction of Duty,'' H.R. McMasters put the blame for Vietnam on our military leaders. To McMasters, it was our generals who were at fault for not speaking out when they disagreed with the civilians at the Pentagon and White House.

As a result of their silence, America became further entrenched in Vietnam. Nine years ago, then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff GEN Hugh Shelton took this message to heart; requiring all 17 four-star general commanders to read Major McMasters' book. The book had an impact. As the situation in Iraq has deteriorated, we have seen our generals stand up to civilian leaders—putting their country before their careers—and courageously advocating for alternative, more sensible policies.

Unfortunately, the same arrogance and incompetence that has blinded U.S. foreign policy for the past 6 years has also allowed the dire warnings from these generals to fall on deaf ears. The candor from the likes of Generals Shinseki and Riggs, and now Abizaid, Casey, and Schoomaker, has been rewarded with dismissal, transfer or demotion.

In my private meeting with General Casey in Iraq 2 months ago, he explained his concern over proposals to ''surge'' additional troops into Iraq if Iraqis are unable to meet their own responsibilities to unite politically and contribute more meaningfully to their own security.

He echoed these objections along with then-Central Command's top general, GEN John Abizaid, in a Washington Post report on December 21, 2006.

Obviously, General Casey is uniquely qualified to make these statements. He has been thoroughly immersed in our Iraq operations. And it is for this reason that he is uniquely prepared to assume the Army Chief of Staff post.

But there is another quality of his that I believe will also serve our Nation and our Army well during his tenure as Chief of Staff. It his is loyalty to our soldiers—from the newly enlisted private to the career officer.

I observed this quality firsthand 3 years ago on a visit to Walter Reed Medical Center. I met with soldiers recuperating from injuries they had suffered in Iraq and Afghanistan, and expressed my gratitude for their brave service.

General Casey happened to be at Walter Reed that day as well. I knew he was there for the same reason I was: to thank these soldiers for their service and to assure them that their sacrifices will never be forgotten.

The Chief of Staff must constantly exhibit such loyalty to his troops. He must be their strongest advocate and continue to address their needs, even when doing so is in direct conflict with the orders being handed down from civilian leadership. General Schoomaker, the outgoing Chief of Staff, has been faced with this situation time and again as the administration proposed inadequate budgets to carry out their deeply flawed Iraq strategy. And he has performed superbly.

As Chief of Staff for the last few years, General Schoomaker, has long voiced concern that the administration failed to budget for the replacement and repair of thousands of war-battered trucks, aircraft, and vehicles. In fact, it was General Schoomaker's testimony last year that compelled me to offer an amendment to fund these priorities and help begin restoring Army readiness. I regret that the White House decided to reward General Schoomaker's candor by replacing him at the Pentagon.

At his recent confirmation hearing the other day, I was pleased to hear that General Casey will resume General Schoomaker's mission to ensure that our forces are outfitted with the equipment they need to get the job done.

Mr. President, there are no easy answers in Iraq. But, when it comes to discerning tactics on the ground, our civilian leaders must defer to our generals. In this case, it is my sincere hope that the President takes heed of the advice of his newly installed Army Chief of Staff, to make the safety and well-being of our soldiers a top priority and not an afterthought. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this nominee for confirmation.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I support the nomination of General George Casey to be Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army and disavow attempts to blame him for the failures in Iraq.

The blame for the disastrous and reckless war in Iraq lies with the President, Vice President DICK CHENEY, former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. The blame starts at the top. It is they who must be held accountable.

General Casey did not author the misguided doctrine of preemptive war. General Casey did not manipulate and politicize intelligence to sell the Iraq war to the American people. And General Casey did not fail to provide a political solution to end the sectarian violence that is now engulfing Iraq. It is the civilian leadership of the Bush administration that continues to fail us in Iraq.

When I traveled to Iraq and met with General Casey, he told me the truth. He said that the U.S. presence was fueling the insurgency. I appreciated his candor. He fully understood the dangers and challenges in Iraq. Unlike so many in the Bush administration, his view of the situation in Iraq was not distorted by rose-colored classes.

General Casey did not lead us down this dangerous path in Iraq. Therefore I cast a ''yes'' vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes 20 seconds.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, let me make it clear, I don't support medals for failure. I don't support promotion to a higher position for failure. I believe that the awards and accolades Senator LEVIN alluded to that have been provided to those who have committed egregious failures was not only inappropriate, it was absolutely insulting.

I also, though, point out that history will judge many of these people who have been given medals of various types, and already that judgment has been harsh. All of us are more concerned about our place in history than we are medals. History and the American people are already judging the failures and the misleading statements, such as ''stuff happens'' and ''mission accomplished'' and a few ''dead-enders'' and ''last throes'' and all of those statements which have been made over the past 3½ years which led the American people to believe we were succeeding in Iraq when many of us knew we weren't because we violated a fundamental principle called the Powell doctrine: If you want to win, you go in with overwhelming force.

The reason I am very concerned today, even though we have a very outstanding general in Petraeus, is that I am not sure we have enough troops still.

Throughout our history, military commanders have been held responsible. Abraham Lincoln held General McClellan responsible and fired him. In World War II, those who were in command who were responsible for December 7, 1941, were held responsible. In the Korean war, General MacArthur was held responsible. The fact is that military leaders are held responsible as well as civilian leaders.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD the number of times President Bush said that he relied on the judgment of the military commanders. Those military commanders did not exercise good judgment and therefore are responsible for the rosy scenario and the inaccurate depiction of facts on the ground in Iraq as they came before our committee, the Armed Services Committee, and spoke to the President of the United States and the American people.

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

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH ON SUPPORT FOR COMMANDERS/GENERALS

President Bush: ''One of the things that's important is for—and one of the reasons why you trust the commanders on the ground is because there needs to be flexibility. And I explained to the Prime Minister that I'll be making my decisions based upon the recommendations of General Casey.'' (President George W. Bush, Press Conference, 7/31/06)

President Bush: ''I have said to the American people, as the Iraqis stand up, we'll stand down. But I've also said that our commanders on the ground will make that decision. And I have—we'll talk to General Casey once he is—conferred with the new Government of Iraq.'' (President George W. Bush, Press Conference, 5/29/06)

President Bush: ''And so the army is getting on its feet. We've turned over a lot of territory to the army. And they're good fighters; they really are. I spent a great deal of time with General Abizaid and General Casey—they were in Washington this past week—these are generals, you'd be happy to hear, who tell me the way it is, not the way they think I would like it to be.'' (President George W. Bush, Remarks On The War On Terror And A Question-And-Answer Session, Louisville, KY, 1/16/06)

President Bush: ''The best people to give any politician advice about whether or not we're achieving a military objective is the people you put out there on the ground. I told you I've got good confidence in these generals and the people who report to them. These are honest, honorable, decent, very capable, smart people, and they'll decide the troop levels.'' (President George W. Bush, Remarks On The War On Terror And A Question-And-Answer Session, Louisville, KY, 1/16/06)

''President Bush said he relies on military advisors and other officials on the ground in Iraq to keep him abreast of the situation in the country, and they're telling him civil war is not imminent. 'This notion that we're in civil war is just not true according to them,' he told Wolf Blitzer in an interview taped earlier this week that aired today. (''President Bush: Iraq Not On Brink Of Civil War,'' Congressional Quarterly, 9/24/06)

''Bush also has said he would rely on the opinions of U.S. military commanders in the two countries for determining how soon troops would be withdrawn. 'As we see more of these Iraqi forces in the lead, we'll be able to continue with our desire, our stated strategy that says as Iraqis stand up, we'll stand down,' the president said. ''In 2006, we expect Iraqis will take more and more control of the battle space, and as they do so, we will need fewer U.S. troops to conduct combat operations around that country.'' (''Bush Says U.S. Forces Will Be Reduced In Iraq, Afghanistan,'' State News Service, 1/4/06)

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, in 2004, General Casey said:

My view of winning is that we are broadly on track to accomplishing our objectives . . . with Iraqi security forces that are capable of maintaining domestic order and denying Iraq as a safe haven for terror, and I believe we are on track to get there by December of 2005.

In September of 2005, General Casey said:

We have a strategy and a plan for success in Iraq, and we are broadly on track in achieving our goals.

Time after time, the American people were told that things were going fine, and they were not.

I wish to emphasize again that I believe General Casey has served this Nation honorably. I think he and his family have made great sacrifices for this country. I have nothing but respect. But to reward failure is going to send a message all around the military that I don't think is a healthy one. I don't support promotion and I don't support medals for failure. I support people being held responsible, and I regret that those who are responsible on the civilian side have not been held more responsible, although, as we speak today, the American people, by their opinions as reflected in the polls, are certainly reflecting their judgment about the performance and responsibility of our civilian leaders.

I hope we can move forward and obtain successes in Iraq under this new strategy. I am not sure right now that General Casey completely supports it, and I don't think that it enhances our chance for succeeding in Iraq. I urge my colleagues to vote against this nomination and select a leader, of which there are many, who is far more capable, in my view, of carrying out the new strategy in Iraq.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time, as I see the majority leader here on the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding that I will be the last speaker. The distinguished minority leader is not going to speak at this time. So after I speak, we will vote. Is that the understanding of the Chair?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That has not been made clear at this time.

Mr. REID. That is what I have been told. But if the minority leader comes to the floor to speak, he can, and I will make my statement now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, when Harry Truman was President, he put a sign on his desk. It said: The buck stops here. He chose this message because it conveyed to the American public that, as President, Truman was responsible for everything in his administration. Everything.

The buck stops here. It is a phrase we should keep in mind as we vote on GEN George Casey's nomination to be Army Chief of Staff.

Despite his service to our country, I know many Senators would like to vote no on General Casey's nomination because he has been associated with a broken Iraq policy. I understand others would like to vote no in an attempt to make the general a scapegoat for a war that has gone horribly wrong. I believe there are still others who are using this nomination as a way to express opposition to the President's escalation proposal, a plan General Casey once opposed but now supports. While I understand these reasons for voting no, I am reminded of that sign on President Truman's desk. In Iraq, the buck stops with President Bush. The Commander in Chief, not General Casey, is responsible for the failed policy in Iraq.

Four years and running, the cost of the war has been staggering. We have lost, as of this morning, 3,111 of our soldiers and seen tens of thousands more wounded. The war has stretched our military and their families to the breaking point, depleted our Treasury of hundreds of billions of dollars, detracted our attention from al-Qaida and the real war on terror, and hurt our image in the Arab community and around the world. Yet despite all this sacrifice and all these costs and because of numerous errors by the Commander in Chief, America is less safe. We must change course.

Unfortunately, President Bush's answer to this growing chaos and sectarian violence in Iraq is not a new direction but more of the same. He wants to send 48,000 more troops to Baghdad and give them mission impossible—policing an Iraqi civil war.

This so-called surge policy has many critics, and one of them used to be General Casey. On January 2 of this year, the general is quoted as saying in the New York Times:

It's always been my view that a heavy and sustained American military presence was not going to solve the problems in Iraq over the long term.

In other words, escalation is not the answer. But just a month later, in his Senate confirmation hearing, he reversed course, saying:

The increase in the U.S. forces is a key piece of our new strategy to secure Baghdad.

One day, escalation was not going to solve the problem; the next day, escalation was a key piece of our strategy. There is a troubling disconnect between General Casey's two statements. I understand he has since attempted to explain his change of heart by noting, in the time between his two comments, that a new strategy, the so-called surge, had been propounded by the White House and more troops were needed to institute the President's new policy. But does General Casey really believe this? Do we believe a general on the battlefield or in his plush Pentagon office? I will take General Casey at his word. After all, the buck stops with the President, not with General Casey.

Even though I have grave concerns about the direction of the war and General Casey, I will vote for his confirmation to be Army Chief of Staff. I do, however, pray that General Casey has the courage to speak his convictions in his new post. The last thing our Nation and our troops need is a ''yes'' man with access to the Oval Office—someone who tells the President what he wants to hear and not what he needs to hear. ''Yes'' men, such as Vice President CHENEY and former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz, led us into this Iraq quagmire. To end the war, the President is going to have to start listening to and heeding the advice of those who disagree with him in order to get us out.

In the Senate this week, we attempted to give the President another chance to listen. We tried to give the bipartisan majority of Senators who oppose escalation the chance to send a clear message to President Bush. Unfortunately, our majority was silenced by a minority of Republicans who decided protecting the President was more important than sending him a message: Do not surge. Do not escalate.

It is time the White House and its champions in Congress stopped playing politics in the war. We have had enough politics and far too little diplomacy. What we need is a strategy that will succeed in Iraq. I hope General Casey will play such a role in bringing such a strategy about and, thus, I will vote for his confirmation.

Mr. President, I yield back all the time, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of General George W. Casey, Jr., to be Chief of Staff, United States Army?

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) is necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senators were necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TESTER). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 83, nays 14, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 45 Ex.]

YEAS—83

Akaka	Durbin	Murkowski
Alexander	Enzi	Murray
Allard	Feingold	Nelson (FL)
Baucus	Grassley	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Gregg	Obama
Biden	Hagel	Pryor
Bingaman	Hatch	Reed
Boxer	Hutchison	Reid
Brown	Inhofe	Roberts
Brownback	Inouye	Rockefeller
Burr	Isakson	Salazar
Byrd	Kennedy	Sanders
Cantwell	Kerry	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Sessions
Carper	Kohl	Shelby
Casey	Kyl	Snowe
Cochran	Landrieu	Specter
Coleman	Lautenberg	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Stevens
Conrad	Levin	Tester
Corker	Lieberman	Thomas
Cornyn	Lincoln	Thune
Craig	Lott	Vitter
Crapo	Lugar	Warner
Dodd	McCaskill	Webb
Dole	McConnell	Whitehouse
Domenici	Menendez	Wyden
Dorgan	Mikulski	

NAYS—14

Bayh	Coburn	Harkin
Bond	DeMint	McCain
Bunning	Ensign	Smith
Chambliss	Feinstein	Sununu
Clinton	Graham	

NOT VOTING—3

Johnson	Martinez	Voinovich

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table, and the President shall be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate shall now resume legislative action.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR THAD COCHRAN ON HIS 10,000TH VOTE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise on behalf of a colleague and friend, Senator THAD COCHRAN. Last Tuesday, THAD cast his 10,000th vote here in the Senate, and in typical fashion, we didn't hear a whole lot about it. As THAD once told a reporter:

That is just the way I was brought up. I believe you don't have to toot your own horn too much.

Always humble, THAD is the perfect embodiment of the southern gentleman, and the Senate is a better and more civil place because of him.

THAD's political career got off to an early start. As a teenager, he passed out campaign literature with his mom in Utica, MS. He helped his dad with voter registration drives, and a few decades later, he would make Bill and Emma Cochran proud by becoming the first Mississippi Republican in more than a century to win a statewide office—no small feat for a guy whose first job was working as a carhop at Gunn's Dairy Bar.

THAD was always a standout. An Eagle Scout, he earned varsity letters in football, basketball, baseball, and tennis and was valedictorian of his high school class. He served with distinction in a 2-year tour with the Navy. He excelled in law school and became a partner in one of Mississippi's top law firms in just 2½ years. And he served the people of the Magnolia State with distinction and grace in the U.S. Congress for 35 years.

THAD's colleagues in the Senate have seen his humility up close. The people at the Neshoba County Fair got to see it for themselves a few years back. As THAD's car pulled up, a big crowd gathered around to shake his hand. So when the passenger side door opened, they all rushed in and got a good close look at THAD's personal assistant, Fred Pagen. They didn't expect to see THAD behind the wheel, nor do a lot of other folks who have picked him up at events in DC and back home.

THAD gets a lot of special treatment. The Ten Thousandth Vote Club is sort of like the Five Hundredth Home Run Club in baseball. As you might expect, Senator BYRD is the Hank Aaron of the Senate, but THAD might get there yet, and those of us who have had the good pleasure of working with him hope that he does.

Winston Churchill once said of an enemy:

He has all the virtues I dislike and all the vices I admire.

Mr. President, I feel the opposite about my friend, THAD COCHRAN. He has all the virtues I admire and none of the vices I dislike.

So I congratulate him on his many years of dedicated service and thank him for his friendship and, above all, his extraordinary example.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there were ever a time during my career here in the Senate where I say I associate myself with those remarks, I do now. THAD COCHRAN is a wonderful man. As the distinguished Republican leader said, he is strong. He doesn't talk very much. He is silent most of the time. He loves the Senate. He is one of the people I look to for maintaining the dignity of the Senate.

On the Appropriations Committee, which I have had the pleasure of serving with him since I came to the Senate, he is as dignified as he is in the Senate and as he is everyplace else. He believes in following regular order. He believes in working through the tedious process the Senate requires. I look forward to working with him this year.

Senator MCCONNELL and I have made a commitment, and Senator COCHRAN knows this, to do our appropriations bills this year. We are going to work together on a bipartisan basis to get those bills completed and Senator COCHRAN will be an integral part of our being able to do this.

We all have fond memories of THAD COCHRAN. My personal feeling of warmth relates to a trip we took. I took my wife Landra and he took his lovely wife Rose and we had a wonderful time. Senator Glenn was there leading the delegation. I will always remember that. I will always remember the relationship of the two of you.

So as we proceed through the difficult days ahead of us in the Senate, everyone within the sound of my voice should understand that one reason we will be able to make it through the troubled waters of the Senate is because of THAD COCHRAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip is recognized.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague from Vermont, Senator LEAHY, for allowing me to go next in line so I can speak briefly about my colleague from the State of Mississippi. I thank Senator MCCONNELL for his remarks, and Senator REID. They did a magnificent job summing up the character of this great Senator from Mississippi.

Senator COCHRAN and I have been in the Congress together now for—this is our 35th year. We came together in the House of Representatives in 1973. He moved over to the Senate in 1978. He was elected, and came here in 1979, and eventually I tagged along with him again.

Senator COCHRAN and I go back to the 1960s. We were both students at the same university, the University of Mississippi. His wife Rose and I were in the same class, and we worked together in student activities. I always felt I had a special friendship with Senator COCHRAN because of my friendship also with his wife Rose.

Our parents were schoolteachers—both his mother and father and my mother. We both started out as Baptists, and I think we still are, in a way. Just right down the line, we have a lot in common. In fact, some people wonder how I get as many votes as I do in Mississippi. It is because I think some people get confused between THAD and TRENT, and I am known in some areas as Thad Lott, but it seems to work. I benefit by standing in the reflection of his great stature in our State of Mississippi.

I am very proud of my colleague from our State. We have had some great Senators from our State, but Senator COCHRAN is rising to the level of the stature of the best of those. So I am very proud of the record he has achieved here, the number of votes he has cast, and I am hoping that he will cast 10,000 more before he decides to leave this great institution.

But I must say on a very personal note, I have never been more proud of my colleague from Mississippi than I was in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and 2006. His quiet, steady, methodical, rational effort to help us get what we needed to recover from that major disaster was an incredible thing to watch. The respect he has in this institution on both sides of the aisle helped him to lead the way in getting the help we needed for our State. I was belated in doing it, but I will never quit doing it, when last fall