S. 331 COSPONSORSHIP

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, Senator KENT CONRAD is an original cosponsor to S. 331, a bill to provide grants from moneys collected from violations of the corporate average fuel economy program to be used to expand infrastructure necessary to increase the availability of alternative fuels.

In my floor statement on January 18, 2007, I referenced Senator CONRAD as a cosponsor but he was omitted from the list of cosponsors of this legislation. I ask that the RECORD be updated to reflect Senator CONRAD's original cosponsorship.

WILLIAM ODOM'S ''VICTORY IS NOT AN OPTION''

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, William Odom is one of the finest intelligence officers who have served in our military. Retiring at the rank of lieutenant general, his distinguished Army career culminated in his heading up the U.S. Army's intelligence division and the National Security Agency. He has worked tirelessly to help the country understand and deal with the challenges to its security and defense. I have known the general for decades, and, like many of my colleagues, I deeply value his judgment and insight.

That is why I read his opinion piece from last Sunday's Washington Post, ''Victory is Not an Option,'' with great interest.

General Odom lays out the truths and myths of the Nation's involvement in Iraq. Among the clear truths is that the dream of a real democracy gaining roots in that war-torn country is simply that, a dream. He rightly points out, too, that any Iraqi government is likely to be more anti than pro-American at the end of the day.

As for the myths, he sensibly lays out that it is pure fantasy for anyone to think that our presence is actually preventing the horrible carnage from unfolding or holding Iran back from gaining influence with its neighbor. It is similarly a flight of the imagination to think that our military presence is actually stanching—as opposed to encouraging—al-Qaida's involvement in the country. Finally, it is a myth to think that we must stay in Iraq ''to support the troops.'' In fact, he notes, many of our brave men and women in the country understand the cold realities that unfold there every day, and many of them believe that we should get out of Iraq.

General Odom makes some sensible suggestions for a new policy direction, something beyond the absurd ''surge'' that is only the same old repast of stay-the-course with a different seasoning. We should get out of Iraq and recognize that our presence there has become a source of instability for the whole Middle East. He smartly suggests that we should work with our international partners to seek order and stability, which will fundamentally alter the balance against the radicals who want to stir up even more strife.

I ask unanimous consent that General Odom's article, ''Victory Is Not an Option,'' now be printed in the RECORD. I urge my colleagues to read this article closely and truly think about what General Odom is saying. The logic is clear and sensible. I think it is incontrovertible.

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

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 11, 2007]

VICTORY IS NOT AN OPTION

(By William E. Odom)

The new National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq starkly delineates the gulf that separates President Bush's illusions from the realities of the war. Victory, as the president sees it, requires a stable liberal democracy in Iraq that is pro-American. The NIE describes a war that has no chance of producing that result. In this critical respect, the NIE, the consensus judgment of all the U.S. intelligence agencies, is a declaration of defeat.

Its gloomy implications—hedged, as intelligence agencies prefer, in rubbery language that cannot soften its impact—put the intelligence community and the American public on the same page. The public awakened to the reality of failure in Iraq last year and turned the Republicans out of control of Congress to wake it up. But a majority of its members are still asleep, or only half-awake to their new writ to end the war soon.

Perhaps this is not surprising. Americans do not warm to defeat or failure, and our politicians are famously reluctant to admit their own responsibility for anything resembling those un-American outcomes. So they beat around the bush, wringing hands and debating ''nonbinding resolutions'' that oppose the president's plan to increase the number of U.S. troops in Iraq.

For the moment, the collision of the public's clarity of mind, the president's relentless pursuit of defeat and Congress's anxiety has paralyzed us. We may be doomed to two more years of chasing the mirage of democracy in Iraq and possibly widening the war to Iran. But this is not inevitable. A Congress, or a president, prepared to quit the game of ''who gets the blame'' could begin to alter American strategy in ways that will vastly improve the prospects of a more stable Middle East.

No task is more important to the well-being of the United States. We face great peril in that troubled region, and improving our prospects will be difficult. First of all, it will require, from Congress at least, public acknowledgment that the president's policy is based on illusions, not realities. There never has been any right way to invade and transform Iraq. Most Americans need no further convincing, but two truths ought to put the matter beyond question:

First, the assumption that the United States could create a liberal, constitutional democracy in Iraq defies just about everything known by professional students of the topic. Of the more than 40 democracies created since World War II, fewer than 10 can be considered truly ''constitutional''—meaning that their domestic order is protected by a broadly accepted rule of law, and has survived for at least a generation. None is a country with Arabic and Muslim political cultures. None has deep sectarian and ethnic fissures like those in Iraq.

Strangely, American political scientists whose business it is to know these things have been irresponsibly quiet. In the lead-up to the March 2003 invasion, neoconservative agitators shouted insults at anyone who dared to mention the many findings of academic research on how democracies evolve. They also ignored our own struggles over two centuries to create the democracy Americans enjoy today. Somehow Iraqis are now expected to create a constitutional order in a country with no conditions favoring it.

This is not to say that Arabs cannot become liberal democrats. When they immigrate to the United States, many do so quickly. But it is to say that Arab countries, as well as a large majority of all countries, find creating a stable constitutional democracy beyond their capacities.

Second, to expect any Iraqi leader who can hold his country together to be pro-American, or to share American goals, is to abandon common sense. It took the United States more than a century to get over its hostility toward British occupation. (In 1914, a majority of the public favored supporting Germany against Britain.) Every month of the U.S. occupation, polls have recorded Iraqis' rising animosity toward the United States. Even supporters of an American military presence say that it is acceptable temporarily and only to prevent either of the warring sides in Iraq from winning. Today the Iraqi government survives only because its senior members and their families live within the heavily guarded Green Zone, which houses the U.S. Embassy and military command.

As Congress awakens to these realities—and a few members have bravely pointed them out—will it act on them? Not necessarily. Too many lawmakers have fallen for the myths that are invoked to try to sell the president's new war aims. Let us consider the most pernicious of them.

(1) We must continue the war to prevent the terrible aftermath that will occur if our forces are withdrawn soon. Reflect on the double-think of this formulation. We are now fighting to prevent what our invasion made inevitable! Undoubtedly we will leave a mess—the mess we created, which has become worse each year we have remained. Lawmakers gravely proclaim their opposition to the war, but in the next breath express fear that quitting it will leave a blood bath, a civil war, a terrorist haven, a ''failed state,'' or some other horror. But this ''aftermath'' is already upon us; a prolonged U.S. occupation cannot prevent what already exists.

(2) We must continue the war to prevent Iran's influence from growing in Iraq. This is another absurd notion. One of the president's initial war aims, the creation of a democracy in Iraq, ensured increased Iranian influence, both in Iraq and the region. Electoral democracy, predictably, would put Shiite groups in power—groups supported by Iran since Saddam Hussein repressed them in 1991. Why are so many members of Congress swallowing the claim that prolonging the war is now supposed to prevent precisely what starting the war inexorably and predictably caused? Fear that Congress will confront this contradiction helps explain the administration and neocon drumbeat we now hear for expanding the war to Iran.

Here we see shades of the Nixon-Kissinger strategy in Vietnam: widen the war into Cambodia and Laos. Only this time, the adverse consequences would be far greater. Iran's ability to hurt U.S. forces in Iraq are not trivial. And the anti-American backlash in the region would be larger, and have more lasting consequences.

(3) We must prevent the emergence of a new haven for al-Qaeda in Iraq. But it was the U.S. invasion that opened Iraq's doors to al-Qaeda. The longer U.S. forces have remained there, the stronger al-Qaeda has become. Yet its strength within the Kurdish

and Shiite areas is trivial. After a U.S. withdrawal, it will probably play a continuing role in helping the Sunni groups against the Shiites and the Kurds. Whether such foreign elements could remain or thrive in Iraq after the resolution of civil war is open to question. Meanwhile, continuing the war will not push al-Qaeda outside Iraq. On the contrary, the American presence is the glue that holds al-Qaeda there now.

(4) We must continue to fight in order to ''support the troops.'' This argument effectively paralyzes almost all members of Congress. Lawmakers proclaim in grave tones a litany of problems in Iraq sufficient to justify a rapid pullout. Then they reject that logical conclusion, insisting we cannot do so because we must support the troops. Has anybody asked the troops?

During their first tours, most may well have favored ''staying the course''—whatever that meant to them—but now in their second, third and fourth tours, many are changing their minds. We see evidence of that in the many news stories about unhappy troops being sent back to Iraq. Veterans groups are beginning to make public the case for bringing them home. Soldiers and officers in Iraq are speaking out critically to reporters on the ground.

But the strangest aspect of this rationale for continuing the war is the implication that the troops are somehow responsible for deciding to continue the president's course. That political and moral responsibility belongs to the president, not the troops. Did not President Harry S. Truman make it clear that ''the buck stops'' in the Oval Office? If the president keeps dodging it, where does it stop? With Congress?

Embracing the four myths gives Congress excuses not to exercise its power of the purse to end the war and open the way for a strategy that might actually bear fruit.

The first and most critical step is to recognize that fighting on now simply prolongs our losses and blocks the way to a new strategy. Getting out of Iraq is the pre-condition for creating new strategic options. Withdrawal will take away the conditions that allow our enemies in the region to enjoy our pain. It will awaken those European states reluctant to collaborate with us in Iraq and the region.

Second, we must recognize that the United States alone cannot stabilize the Middle East.

Third, we must acknowledge that most of our policies are actually destabilizing the region. Spreading democracy, using sticks to try to prevent nuclear proliferation, threatening ''regime change,'' using the hysterical rhetoric of the ''global war on terrorism''—all undermine the stability we so desperately need in the Middle East.

Fourth, we must redefine our purpose. It must be a stable region, not primarily a democratic Iraq. We must redirect our military operations so they enhance rather than undermine stability. We can write off the war as a ''tactical draw'' and make ''regional stability'' our measure of ''victory.'' That single step would dramatically realign the opposing forces in the region, where most states want stability. Even many in the angry mobs of young Arabs shouting profanities against the United States want predictable order, albeit on better social and economic terms than they now have.

Realigning our diplomacy and military capabilities to achieve order will hugely reduce the numbers of our enemies and gain us new and important allies. This cannot happen, however, until our forces are moving out of Iraq. Why should Iran negotiate to relieve our pain as long as we are increasing its influence in Iraq and beyond? Withdrawal will awaken most leaders in the region to their own need for U.S.-led diplomacy to stabilize their neighborhood.

If Bush truly wanted to rescue something of his historical legacy, he would seize the initiative to implement this kind of strategy. He would eventually be held up as a leader capable of reversing direction by turning an imminent, tragic defeat into strategic recovery.

If he stays on his present course, he will leave Congress the opportunity to earn the credit for such a turnaround. It is already too late to wait for some presidential candidate for 2008 to retrieve the situation. If Congress cannot act, it, too, will live in infamy.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN RECOGNITION OF SEHNERT'S BAKERY

• Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate a very special place in my hometown of McCook, NE. It is a place which exemplifies the thousands of family-owned small businesses lining the main streets of every small town in America, businesses which are the driving force in keeping those towns economically viable.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Sehnert's Bakery in McCook, NE. It was in 1957 when Walt and Jean Sehnert, the grandchildren of immigrants who came to America 110 years ago, bought the bakery as a place to work hard, earn a decent living, and raise a family.

Today, their son Matt Sehnert and his wife Shelly carry on the tradition by providing the people of McCook with some of the most delicious pastries on the planet. Matt and Shelly credit a dedicated and hard-working crew, who also take pride in Sehnert's longstanding tradition.

As many small businesses do in order to survive in a competitive environment, Matt and Shelly have modernized Sehnert's Bakery and expanded it to include a catering service and cafe, where I often meet with constituents during visits home.

My memories of Sehnert's go back to when I was a teenager in McCook and was able to get a job there, working early Saturday mornings. I learned a lot about how to make piecrusts and decorate cakes. I also learned that it is easy to overdose on glazed donuts when you work in a bakery Walt Sehnert can still recall my first day on the job.

My fellow colleagues, if you ever have the pleasure of visiting my hometown of McCook, NE, I urge you to drop by Sehnert's Bakery and enjoy some of their mouth-watering donuts, or maybe some pies or perhaps one of their famous ''Jiffy Burgers,'' whose recipe remains a closely guarded secret in McCook.

Sehnert's Bakery and Bieroc Café Catering Service is located at 312 Norris Avenue. That is Norris, as in George Norris, who very capably served Nebraska in the U.S. Senate from 1913 to 1943. Yes, McCook has produced two U.S. Senators, as well as three of Nebraska's Governors. Not bad for a town with a population of just 8,000 people; but of course, that is why the Sehnerts and I are proud to call it home.•

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:57 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of it reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 34. An act to establish a pilot program in certain United States district courts to encourage enhancement or expertise in patent cases among district judges.

H.R. 342. An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 555 Independence Street in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, as the ''Rush Hudson Limbaugh, Sr. United States Courthouse''.

H.R. 414. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 60 Calle McKinley, West in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, as the ''Miguel Angel Garcia Mendez Post Office Building''.

H.R. 798. An act to direct the Administrator of General Services to install a photovoltaic system for the headquarters building of the Department of Energy.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 44. Concurrent resolution honoring and praising the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on the occasion of its 98th anniversary.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 34. An act to establish a pilot program in certain United States district courts to encourage enhancement of expertise in patent cases among district judges; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 414. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 60 Calle McKinley, West in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, as the ''Miguel Angel Garcia Mendez Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 798. An act to direct the Administrator of General Services to install a photovoltaic system for the headquarters building of the Department of Energy; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

The following concurrent resolution was read, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 44. Concurrent resolution honoring and praising the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on the occasion of its 98th anniversary; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 574. A bill to express the sense of Congress on Iraq.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated: