

Just try to talk to the people in the region so we can find some common solutions.

I know it is not going to be easy. It will be very difficult. But I know of no other alternative—no other alternative—but to give them a date and say: we are out of here; by this certain date we are going to start repositioning troops elsewhere in the region. We should tell them that so they sober up more—not just Prime Minister Maliki but the other principals in the country—and realize they have to start getting their act together. As I said, we need to have some very serious negotiations with groups in the region and also with countries in the region so we can manage the situation as best we possibly can.

This is one of the most serious issues I have confronted since I have been in the Senate in the last several years, and I commend my colleagues for addressing it so seriously. It is the right thing to do. But it is also the right thing to do to start debating this issue in the Senate. I think we will be doing the country a great service if we do.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WEBB). The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I ask unanimous consent that for the next 30 minutes, I be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes and that Senator KYL be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes and Senator THOMAS be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes.

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

IRAQ

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise today to oppose the resolution, S. 574, the Senate will vote in relation to tomorrow. This resolution states simply that:

No. 1, Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq; and No. 2, Congress disapproves of the decision of President George W. Bush announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional U.S. combat troops to Iraq.

Mr. President, the first paragraph of that resolution is a commendable one and one every Member of this body should support, and will. However, the second paragraph is simply inconsistent with a vote every Member has already made and should be opposed by every Member of this body. Therefore, the resolution as a whole should be opposed.

Exactly 3 weeks ago, on January 26, the Senate unanimously approved GEN David Petraeus for his fourth star and to be commander of multinational forces in Iraq. No Senator opposed his nomination. In my 12 years in the Con-

gress, I do not think I have seen Members of Congress express any higher confidence or support for a nominee for any position than they have for GEN David Petraeus. I have not heard anyone criticize him, and rightly so.

In his nomination hearing, when asked about his opinion of the President's plan for Iraq that he now has the responsibility of executing, General Petraeus said:

I believe this plan can succeed if, in fact, all of those enablers and all the rest of the assistance is in fact provided.

General Petraeus supports this plan. Now, the same Senate that voted unanimously to confirm General Petraeus is going to vote on whether they agree with the plan he supports and that they confirmed him to execute. That vote has not been taken yet, so obviously we don't know the outcome.

Some people would like to mislead the American people into thinking that Republicans are opposed to debating Iraq and the various resolutions in Iraq. In fact, Republicans welcome that debate, and that is why many of us are here today. However, Republicans rightfully oppose the Democrats' dictating what resolutions can be considered.

If Senators truly disapprove of this decision, they should be willing to vote for or against a resolution that clearly expresses their convictions, and that is exactly what Senator GREGG's resolution does. However, Democrats are not willing to do that. Senator GREGG's resolution expresses the sense of the Congress that:

No funds should be cut off or reduced from American troops in the field which would result in undermining their safety or ability to complete their assigned missions.

If Senators truly do not support the mission we are sending General Petraeus and our men and women in uniform to carry out, then they should be willing to have an up-or-down vote on the Gregg resolution.

For the record, let me restate my position on the proposed troop increase. Several weeks ago, President Bush addressed the situation in Iraq before the American people, and everyone was anxious to hear his plans for a new strategy. It is clear that Americans want a victory in Iraq; however, they do not want our presence there to be open-ended. I agree, and most importantly, I believe it is time for the Iraqi Government to step up and take responsibility. They need to take control of their country, both militarily and politically. I believe the Iraqis must deliver on their promises.

I come from a strong and proud military State, home to 13 military installations, and our service men and women have answered the call of duty and performed courageously. No one questions our troops' performance and unwavering commitment, and we will continue to support them. Many of our troops, including the 3rd Infantry Division based at Fort Stewart, GA, and

Fort Benning, GA, are preparing to head overseas, some for their third tour of duty in Iraq, as we speak today.

The President's decision to send additional combat brigades to Baghdad and Anbar Province in western Iraq is aimed at defeating the insurgency in those areas and increasing stability for the Iraqi people. However, we must also see an increased commitment from the Iraqis. This is also part of the new strategy, and I am committed to holding the administration and the Iraqis accountable in this area. Those of us in Congress have a responsibility to ask questions and seek answers on behalf of the American people when our strategy and tactics are not getting the job done.

I have expressed my concern and frustration with progress on the part of the Iraqis not only to the President and the White House advisers but to our military leadership testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee as well. In my conversations with the White House and with the Department of Defense leadership, I have made it clear that my support of any increase in troops is conditioned upon those troops being sent on a specific mission and upon the completion of that mission that they should be redeployed.

I firmly believe that just a large increase in troops without having a specific mission will only increase insurgent opposition and that a withdrawal of U.S. forces at this time would be detrimental to Iraq's security and extremely dangerous for American soldiers. That particular issue has been affirmed by every single individual in the U.S. military testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee. Failure in Iraq will result in expanded and intensified conflict in the Middle East, and that kind of instability is clearly not in the best interests of America or the international community.

Now that the President has taken serious steps to admit his mistakes, take responsibility, and revise the strategy, Americans do seek positive results. It has been said by many of my colleagues, as well as many of my own constituents, that the situation in Iraq requires a political and not a military solution. I strongly agree with that position. However, it is not possible, in my opinion, to have a political solution or to make political progress if citizens are afraid to leave their homes for fear of being shot or kidnaped or if they are afraid to let their children go to school because it is unsafe to do so. Some level of order and stability must be in place before a political solution can take hold.

In America, we take order and stability for granted because we are blessed to live in a country that is extremely safe, secure, and stable. However, Iraq is not the same as the United States. They do not live in a secure and stable society, and order and stability must be in place before there can be

any hope for a long-term political solution. The additional troops we are sending are meant to create that order and stability, particularly in Baghdad. Unfortunately, the Iraqi military and Government is not yet mature enough to do that job themselves, so we are partnering with them to help them succeed.

There is nothing easy or pretty about war, and this war is no exception. This war has not gone as well as any of us had hoped. Additionally, the President's new plan, which is already being carried out in Iraq, is not guaranteed to work. However, it is my firm conviction that the President's plan deserves a chance to succeed, and we in the Congress should do all we can to help it succeed. The Reid resolution does not do that. That is why I urge my colleagues to vote against cloture on the motion to proceed to the Reid resolution tomorrow. The resolution opposes the President's plan without offering any alternative. It opposes the mission which the Senate has unanimously confirmed General Petraeus to carry out.

I urge a vote against the implementation of cloture tomorrow.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, speaking to this resolution, I wish to be clear that it had been my intention to cast a "no" vote to proceeding to this nonbinding resolution. The majority, of course, has to muster 60 votes in order to proceed on that particular resolution.

I believe my time will be more productive fulfilling a commitment I have made to lead a trip to Iraq. Without disclosing when or precisely where we will be in the Middle East, I will tell my colleagues that I will be able to personally deliver a message not only to our troops of support of the American people for their mission but also hopefully to deliver a message directly to the Prime Minister of Iraq that we expect him to continue to fulfill the commitments he has made to carry out this new strategy, which has signs of success already, and to learn directly, firsthand from our commanders and troops on the ground, their assessment of how this new mission is proceeding. What the Congress needs to do is to provide assistance and to be able to bring home a report unfiltered through the media of precisely where the conditions stand right now.

While I would have voted no, in effect, I will be voting no by my presence in Iraq.

There are three reasons I oppose the resolution to move forward with this particular nonbinding resolution. First of all, we have been debating almost nonstop this subject of Iraq, now, for several weeks—both in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. So there has been no lack of debate.

Rest assured that Republicans are committed to continuing this debate

for as long as the American people believe it is productive. We welcome debate. We also welcome something else: The opportunity to express ourselves in a meaningful way, not simply on a nonbinding resolution. We have no objection to voting on this nonbinding resolution as long as we can also vote on something that is actually more meaningful than that, and that is a resolution that demonstrates we will not withdraw support for our troops. We aim to support them in their mission.

Having been precluded, blocked, for being able to have a vote on that resolution, what we are saying is that we should move forward with the debate, but until the majority leader is willing to provide Members a vote on the resolution for support of the troops, we should not be voting on other resolutions.

I think this is time for Democrats to take a stand. Either you support the troops in the battlefield or you don't, none of this sort of slow bleed and nonbinding resolution obscures your true position. It seems to me, if you merely seem to tell the President you don't like what he is doing, you have plenty of opportunities to do that, but a resolution can have a very deleterious effect on the morale of our troops, on our enemies who see it as a sign of weakness, and perhaps on our allies who wonder if we see the mission through.

If you are serious about stopping this effort because you believe it has failed or cannot succeed, obviously you need to do what Congress has the ability to do and that is vote no on the funding of the troops.

Instead, what we have been told is that in the House of Representatives, after this first step of the nonbinding resolution, there will be a second step, this slow-bleed strategy, a concept that says Congress will begin to micro-manage how troops are deployed in the field and around the world and equipment provided to them, and that will determine whether any will receive Congress's continued support.

We cannot condition our support for the troops. They need to know that when we send them into harm's way, they will have everything they need from reinforcements to equipment. This sort of slow-bleed strategy that has been announced over in the House of Representatives is extraordinarily dangerous and deleterious to our mission.

First of all, it seems to me there are some signs of success. This is the first reason I would have voted no on the resolution. We do need to give the new strategy the President has announced a chance to succeed.

There are plenty of stories, and I will have them printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks, about some initial successes—the Shiite militia leaders appearing to leave their strongholds in Baghdad in anticipation of our plan to increase our activities there.

The powerful Shiite cleric, Moqtada al-Sadr has left Iraq, spending his time

in Iran away from the danger that might await him if he stayed in Baghdad.

In Al Anbar Province in the west, the tribal sheiks have now significantly begun to align themselves with the United States, as a result of which we have been able to recruit hundreds more police officers who were not possible to recruit in the past.

A real sign is the fact that Sunni and Shiite Arab lawmakers have announced plans to form two new political blocs in Iraq. The Iraqi military is taking a significantly, more robust role, now ordering tens of thousands of residents to leave homes—these are the so-called squatters—that they are occupying illegally, and, instead, saying they will have the original owners of those homes come back. This is important because the people who have been displaced or dispossessed primarily are Sunnis. The Shiite militias came in and kicked them out and allowed squatters in their home.

It is highly significant the Iraqi Government has said, through a LTG Aboud Qanbar, who is leading this new crackdown, that they are going to close the borders with Iran and Syria, they are going to extend the curfew in Baghdad, set up new checkpoints and reoccupy the houses that have been occupied by the illegal Shiites.

Another significant change, they actually raided a Shiite mosque which was a center of illegally armed militias, kidnapping, torture and murder activities and a place where a good deal of weapons had been stored. This, in the past, had not been done. But it is now being done, all as a part of Maliki's commitment to change the rules of engagement and to commit himself to support politically the victories that had been occurring on the ground militarily but which were fleeting because when you capture people and put them in jail, if the politicians get them out of jail the next day, you have gained nothing. We need to give it a chance.

I referred to former Representative Hamilton of the Hamilton-Baker Commission, who said in testimony:

So I guess my bottom line on the surge is, look, the president's plan ought to be given a chance. Give it a chance, because we heard all of this. This that you confirmed . . . the day before yesterday, this is his idea. He's the supporter of it. Give it a chance.

Second, we need to support this mission and oppose the nonbinding resolution opposed to it because it would send a horrible message not only to our troops and military leaders but to our allies and to our enemies.

General Petraeus, whom I mentioned a moment ago, at his confirmation hearing got this question from Senator LIEBERMAN.

Senator LIEBERMAN: You also said in response to a question from Senator McCain that adoption of a resolution of disapproval . . . would not . . . have a beneficial effect on our troops in Iraq. But I want to ask you, what effect would Senate passage of a resolution of disapproval of this new way ahead

that you embrace—what effect would it have on our enemies in Iraq?

Lieutenant General PETRAEUS: Sir, as I said in the opening statement, this is a test of wills, at the end of the day. And in that regard . . . a commander of such an endeavor would obviously like the enemy to feel that there's no hope.

Senator LIEBERMAN: And a resolution—a Senate passed resolution of disapproval for this new strategy in Iraq would give the enemy some encouragement, some feeling that—well, some clear expression that the American people are divided.

Lieutenant General PETRAEUS: That's correct, sir.

Soldiers believe the same thing. From ABC News, on February 13, they asked Army 1SG Louis Barnum what they thought of the resolution. They had strong words. Here is what one said:

Makes me sick. I'm a born and raised Democrat—it makes me sad.

On the NBC nightly news, January 26, interview of three of our soldiers. SPC Tyler Johnson said:

Those people are dying. You know what I am saying? You may support—oh, we support the troops' but you're not supporting what they do, what they share and sweat for, what they believe for, what we die for. It just don't make sense to me.

SSG Manuel Sahagun:

One thing I don't like is when people back home say they support the troops but they don't support the war. If they're going to support us, support us all the way.

There was in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, February 15, a poignant communication from an Army sergeant whose name is Daniel Dobson. He said:

The question has been posed to me recently what congressional resolution hurts troops morale the most. No doubt we would be happy to come home tomorrow. But the thought is bittersweet. Most servicemembers will tell you the same thing: There is no honor in retreat . . . and there is no honor in what the Democrats have proposed. It stings me to the core to think that Americans would rather sell their honor than fight for a cause. Those of us who fight [for peace] know all too well that peace has a very bloody price tag.

The American people believe this as well. FOX News, according to an opinion dynamics poll in the last couple of days, 47 percent of the American people say it is more likely to encourage the enemy and hurt troop morale compared with 24 percent who think it would make a positive difference to the policy of the United States toward Iraq.

So we better be careful what kind of message is sent through a so-called nonbinding resolution. It would not change the course of what we are doing on the ground in Iraq, but it can certainly affect our enemy and the morale of our troops and our allies.

I conclude by saying it seems to me it would be a huge mistake to proceed to vote only on a resolution which is acknowledged by its proponents as being merely a first step toward a second step of reducing and ultimately removing support for the troops whom we have sent into harm's way. Far better it would be for us to continue this debate at the conclusion of which we

would vote on another resolution which would explicitly express our support for our troops and their mission.

To expound in further detail, I oppose this resolution and would vote "no" on taking it up without considering other resolutions first, because it would put a halt to the progress which has begun to occur in Iraq since the President announced new strategy. Some examples:

SHIITE MILITIAS LEAVE SADR CITY

Shiite militia leaders already appear to be leaving their strongholds in Baghdad in anticipation of the U.S. and Iraqi plan to increase the troop presence in the Iraqi capital, according to the top U.S. commander in the country. "We have seen numerous indications Shia militia leaders will leave, or already have left, Sadr City to avoid capture by Iraqi and coalition security forces," Army Gen. George W. Casey, Jr. said in a written statement submitted to the Senate Armed Services Committee as part of his confirmation hearing today to be Army chief of staff.

MOQTADA AL-SADR LIVING IN IRAN

The powerful Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr has left Iraq and has been living in Iran for the past several weeks . . . With fresh American forces arriving in Baghdad as part of the White House plan to stabilize the capital, officials in Washington suggested that Mr. Sadr might have fled Iraq to avoid being captured or killed during the crackdown.

SUNNIS BATTLE AL QAEDA IN AL ANBAR

Before tribal sheiks aligned themselves with U.S. forces in the violent deserts of western Iraq, the number of people willing to become police officers in the city of Ramadi—the epicenter of the fight against the insurgent group known as al-Qaeda in Iraq—might not have filled a single police pickup. "Last March was zero," said Maj. Gen. Richard C. Zilmer, the Marine commander in western Iraq, referring to the number of men recruited that month. With the help of a confederation of about 50 Sunni Muslim tribal sheiks, the U.S. military recruited more than 800 police officers in December and is on track to do the same this month. Officers credit the sheiks' cooperation for the diminishing violence in Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province.

SUNNIS AND SHIITES MOVE AWAY FROM SECT-ARIANISM

Sunni and Shiite Arab lawmakers announced plans [January 31] to form two new blocs in Iraq's parliament they hope will break away from the ethnic and religious mold of current alliances and ease sectarian strife. But though both blocs said they hoped to eventually draw in members of all ethnic and religious groups, one initially will be made up entirely of Shiite Muslim politicians and the other of Sunni Muslims.

IRAQ MILITARY TAKING A LEADING ROLE

The Iraqi government on Tuesday ordered tens of thousands of Baghdad residents to leave homes they are occupying illegally, in a surprising and highly challenging effort to reverse the tide of sectarian cleansing that has left the capital bloodied and balkanized. In a televised speech, Lt. Gen. Aboud Qanbar, who is leading the new crackdown, also announced the closing of Iraq's borders with Iran and Syria, an extension of the curfew in Baghdad by an hour, and the setup of new checkpoints run by the Defense and Interior Ministries, both of which General Qanbar said he now controlled.

IRAQI SECURITY FORCES RAID SHIITE MOSQUE

A U.S. military spokesman on Thursday hailed a joint American-Iraqi raid on Baghdad's leading Shiite Muslim mosque as proof

that the Baghdad security plan is being applied evenly against all sides of the country's sectarian divide. In a statement released Thursday, the U.S. military said the mosque was raided "during operations targeting illegally armed militia kidnapping, torture and murder activities." It said the mosque had been used "to conduct sectarian violence against Iraqi civilians as well as a safe haven and weapons storage area for illegal militia groups." Sunni Muslims have reported being held and beaten in the mosque, but little had been done about it before. The Supreme Council's armed wing, the Badr Organization, has been accused of kidnapping and torturing Sunnis. The statement said U.S. forces guarded the area around the mosque while Iraqi soldiers entered it with the cooperation of its security guards.

BAKER AND HAMILTON HAVE URGED THE SENATE TO CAPITALIZE ON THIS PROGRESS

Hamilton: So I guess my bottom line on the surge is, look, the president's plan ought to be given a chance. Give it a chance, because we heard all of this. The general that you confirmed 80-to-nothing the day before yesterday, this is his idea. He's the supporter of it. Give it a chance.

Baker: And let me . . . read from the report with respect to this issue of the surge, because there are only two conditions upon our support for a surge. One is that it be short-term and the other is that it be called for by the commander in Iraq. President Bush said this is not an open-ended commitment. Secretary Gates said this is a temporary surge and . . . General Petraeus is the guy that's to carry it out and he was the person that originally recommended it.

I also oppose this resolution because I believe it would send a horrible message to our troops and our military leaders, our allies and our enemies.

The majority leader has said that he doesn't think the resolution "matters" substantively, and that the politics are all that is important. He said:

Well, it doesn't matter what resolution we move forward to. You know, I can count. I don't know if we'll get 60 votes. But I'll tell you one thing: There are 21 Republicans up for reelection this time.

I believe, contrary to the opinion of the Majority Leader, that the non-binding words in this resolution do matter. Here's why.

General Petraeus Believes the resolution hurts his Mission.

This is from Petraeus' confirmation hearing:

Senator LIEBERMAN. You also said in response to a question from Senator McCain that adoption of a resolution of disapproval, . . . would not . . . have a beneficial effect on our troops in Iraq. But I want to ask you, what effect would Senate passage of a resolution of disapproval of this new way ahead that you embrace—what effect would it have on our enemies in Iraq?

Lieutenant General PETRAEUS. Sir, as I stated in the opening statement, this is a test of wills, at the end of the day. And in that regard . . . a commander in such an endeavor would obviously like the enemy to feel that there's no hope.

Senator LIEBERMAN. And a resolution—a Senate-passed resolution of disapproval for this new strategy in Iraq would give the enemy some encouragement, some feeling that—well, some clear expression that the American people were divided.

Lieutenant General PETRAEUS: That's correct, sir. Soldiers believe the resolution undermines them.

ABC News, Feb. 13:

ABC News recently asked Army sergeants in Ramadi what they thought of the resolution, and they had strong words.

"Makes me sick," said First Sgt. Louis Barnum. [I'm] born and raised a Democrat—it makes me sad."

"I don't want to bad mouth the president at all. To me[,] that is treason," said SGT. Brian Orzechowski.

From NBC Nightly News, January 26:

Specialist Tyler Johnson:

Those people are dying. You know what I'm saying? You may support—"Oh, we support the troops," but you're not supporting what they do, what they share and sweat for, what they believe for, what we die for. It just don't make sense to me.

SSG Manuel Sahagun:

One thing I don't like is when people back home say they support the troops but they don't support the war. If they're going to support us, support us all the way.

SPC Peter Manna:

If they don't think we're doing a good job, everything that we've done here is all in vain.

From Fort-Worth Star Telegram, February 15, 2007:

Army SGT Daniel Dobson:

The question has been posed to me recently what congressional resolution hurts troop morale the most. No doubt we would be happy to come home tomorrow. But the thought is bittersweet. Most service members would tell you the same thing: There is no honor in retreat . . . and there is no honor in what the Democrats have proposed. It stings me to the core to think that Americans would rather sell their honor than fight for a cause. Those of us who fight for [peace] know all too well that peace has a very bloody price tag.

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC BELIEVES THAT THE RESOLUTION UNDERMINES THE TROOPS

From FOX NEWS quoting an opinion dynamics poll:

47 percent say it is more likely to encourage the enemy and hurt troop morale, compared with 24 percent who think it would make a positive difference to U.S. policy toward Iraq.

Finally, this resolution is but the first step in a "slow bleed" strategy, and should be rejected for that reason as well.

Democrats claim that they just want an up or down vote on this resolution to send a message to the President, but I fear that the real plan is much more expansive. If this resolution passes, votes to cut off support for our troops and micromanaging the war won't be far behind.

In the other Chamber, Representative MURTHA has made it clear that he intends to bleed our troops of support for their mission in Iraq. Speaking about his resolution, MURTHA said: "They won't be able to continue. They won't be able to do the deployment. They won't have the equipment, they don't have the training and they won't be able to do the work. There's no question in my mind."

Speaker PELOSI essentially endorsed this slow-bleed strategy, according to reports in The Politico this morning.

Those who believe that this vote is a simple gesture, and that it will be the

last word on the "surge" from this body, then why did Senator FEINGOLD say on the floor just this morning that the Warner resolution is a "first step"? Please listen to these additional quotes from some of my Democratic colleagues:

This is from the Foreign Relations Committee, January 24, 2007:

Senator BIDEN: But there's also one other thing, and I commit to everyone today, and I will end with this: that unless the President demonstrates very quickly that he is unlikely to continue down the road he's on, this will be only the first step in this committee. I will be introducing—I know Senator DODD may today introduce and another may—I know Senator OBAMA, Senator KERRY, probably all of you have binding, constitutionally legitimate, binding pieces of legislation. We will bring them up.

On "Meet The Press," January 28, 2007:

Mr. Russert: Do you believe that it's inevitable Democrats will cut funding for the war off?

Senator SCHUMER: Well, we'll certainly ratchet up the pressure against President Bush. The bottom line is that this escalation, for instance, is so poorly received, not just by Democrats, but by all of the American people. Our first step will be this sense of the Senate resolution. But it's only the first step.

From Speaker PELOSI, February 13, 2007:

A vote of disapproval will set the stage for additional Iraq legislation which will be coming to the House floor.

If our Democratic colleagues don't intend to make this resolution the "first step" in a campaign to cut off funding for our operations in Iraq, then why won't they allow a vote on the Gregg resolution?

In summary, debate? Yes. But votes that are meaningful—not just on a critical non-binding resolution but on a commitment of support for our troops and their mission as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming has 10 minutes.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for his remarks. I certainly agree it would be a mistake to send any message that we are not in support of our troops and, indeed, that is what voting on one message would do. Certainly, there are different views in the Senate and legitimately so. We recognize that. That is the way it is in Congress.

I resist a little bit the idea that has come up on the other side of the aisle that we have not talked about this, we have not debated it. I say we have talked about it, we have talked about it for several months. We have debated it. There is clearly a difference of view. Most everyone has the same idea that the situation must be changed and must be improved there. No one argues with that.

The issue is that we can back off and deny the support we have for what we have accomplished or we can move forward with the President, who has a change in plan. That is something we need to remember. We are not talking about simply continuing to do the

same thing. We have new leadership there, we have some new strategies there, we have some ideas as to what might be done.

Our troops continue to do an incredible job, but it has not gone as well as we would like. Therefore, it is appropriate that we make some changes. In order to make some changes, it is probably necessary to change the arrangement we have, change the numbers so we can do something and to begin again to devise a movement that will get us out of there in a relatively short time.

Our military leaders know that. They accept that. Their plans embrace that idea that we have to do something different, that we have to start coming to some transition and conclusion. The President also has acknowledged this.

It is not simple. None of us like war. None of us like to have our troops at risk, there is no question about that. But the fact is there exists a terrorism threat to the United States, somewhat centered in this area. The fact is, we need to complete the task and to be able to turn some stability over to a government in Iraq that can move forward.

The United States cannot complete this mission alone. And the Iraqis, of course, must keep their commitment to do more than they have. Fortunately, we are seeing some movement in that direction. We are seeing the support building, and we need to continue to press for that with the surrounding countries.

The President has made it very clear to the Iraqi President that our support is not open-ended. I hope we continue to do that.

The administration has installed new leadership. We have had good performance there, but we need to be moving in a somewhat different direction, a change from what we are doing. That is the plan. That is what it is all about.

I am a little discouraged that we act as if we have not talked about it, we act as if we have not made a move upon it, and now we have a nonbinding resolution. But as the previous speaker said, we also need to offer more than one amendment. There are different options. We have to recognize the Senate is close in numbers, and we have some differences. We have to have an opportunity to talk about different things. Hopefully, that is what this is all about.

It is peculiar political posturing to sound off with sense-of-the-Senate resolutions on the heels of having unanimously confirmed the general who is going over there to take over. He has a plan. It would be discouraging to him, I am sure, to learn we are sending him over there, but we are not going to do the things he needs to do. It is important for folks to understand this plan does not involve just sending troops and put a bandaid on the problem. We have commitments from the Iraqi Government to step up security and reconciliation efforts. We need to make

decisions from where we are now at this point in the fight to move in a somewhat different direction.

One thing is for sure. We are not moving the ball by just talking from the sidelines. Here we have an opportunity to do that—not a never-ending commitment but one to make some changes, complete this task. However, of course, it is a little premature to be debating a nonbinding resolution but, nevertheless, we have different views and that is where we are, and that is fine. But I think, in fairness, politically, we do need to have the opportunity to act on more than just a single amendment so we can have some chance to talk about other items that have an impact on Iraq.

The resolution will only serve to score political points and undermines our efforts to achieve a positive result in what we are seeking to do. So I am concerned today with respect to this process, but we can make it work. And we need to make it work. Here we are. Let's make sure we have an opportunity to make it balanced, we have an opportunity to talk about both sides, we have an opportunity to talk about some of the other kinds of opportunities.

The majority will not let the minority offer amendments, and they should. This is not a one-sided debate, and there are certain items we need to discuss.

Leader McCONNELL has made more than one good-faith effort to meet the majority in the middle of the aisle, and we, I hope, will continue to do that. We must do that. We have proposed to give the majority the votes they want if they will simply give us the votes we would like to have. That seems to make a great deal of sense.

So we are in sort of a procedural tie-up on something for which we know there are differences on the policy, clearly, and we will simply have to work on that. And we have to recognize the responsibility and the commitment the President has made and the plan he has to change things there so we can go forward. So we need to give the troops and the Iraqis the opportunity to work more to change the situation there.

So the purpose of this whole exercise, of course, is to put a government in place in Iraq so they can take care of themselves, for us to be able to remove our being there and our commitment there. I think we have a chance to do this. So I hope if we are going to move, we have a chance to move on more than one opportunity and one resolution. And I think that will be the case.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I come before the body today to let my colleagues know I intend to vote for cloture on the single and simple resolution that will be before this body tomorrow afternoon.

When one looks at the content of what is included in this resolution, it is

very simple. In its simplest terms, it says, first and foremost, we support our troops. We support our troops. Who in this body would disagree with that statement?

Secondly, it makes another statement, another important but very simple statement, and that is that we disagree with the President's plan to add an additional 21,500 troops into Iraq. We disagree with the President's plan.

That is a simple resolution. We should be able to bring that resolution to this floor. We should be able to have it debated. And we should be able to have an up-or-down vote on that resolution.

I wish it were otherwise. I wish that, in fact, we were debating the various resolutions that have been suggested that we debate on this floor by the majority leader in the last week, where he has offered the minority leader on the Republican side the opportunity to come in and debate the Warner resolution, the McCain-Lieberman resolution, as well as this resolution, and a number of different configurations which have been offered to the minority party.

But the reality today is this Chamber, through the minority party, wants to stop a vote on any resolution relating to Iraq. They simply want to stop a vote. What we need to do as a Chamber, in my view, is to move forward with the deliberation of the great Senators who are a part of this Senate and have a robust debate on Iraq that sets forth the different alternatives that have been presented and come to some kind of conclusion that gives direction to America and to this country on how we ought to move forward in Iraq.

I wish we were here in part debating the Warner-Levin resolution because when you think about the content of the Warner-Levin resolution, in that resolution you also find what I believe is the best of what we have to offer. You have a thoughtful proposal that says, yes, we disagree with the President, but we also have a new direction in which we believe we ought to march forward in Iraq. That bipartisan resolution, that was largely drafted by Senator WARNER and Senator NELSON and Senator COLLINS, of which I am a co-sponsor, is a way forward. It is a way to describe a new direction for us as we move forward in Iraq.

I also wish we were here today and tomorrow, and even into next week, debating the resolution which has been brought forward by my dear friends, Senator LIEBERMAN and Senator MCCAIN. They have a different point of view than other Members of this body. They have a different point of view than Senator WARNER and I do with respect to how we ought to move forward in Iraq. But, nonetheless, they are people of good faith who have a point of view that ought to be debated in this body, and we ought to have a vote on it.

Unfortunately, the procedural mechanisms which have been put forward by

the minority party will keep us from actually debating that particular resolution and having a debate and a vote on that resolution.

I believe the ultimate goal we all have in this Chamber is we want to have peace in Iraq, and we want to have a peaceful Middle East. But I also believe that unless we are able to find some way of working together in a bipartisan manner, that key ingredient of how we find a peaceful avenue in Iraq and in the Middle East is going to elude us.

For sure, today is simply one of the opening chapters of the great debate we will have in this Chamber in the weeks and months, perhaps even in the years, ahead with respect to how we move forward in Iraq and how we move forward in the Middle East. Without a sense of bipartisanship, we will not be able to find that unity which is an essential ingredient for us to be able to move forward.

It dismays me we have not been able to find the bipartisanship to get us to the 60-vote threshold so we can move forward and have a robust debate on this issue that will be before the body tomorrow, as well as other issues and resolutions that would be brought forward by my colleagues.

As I speak at this time, the House of Representatives—just right down the hallway from where I stand right now—is about ready to begin a vote—a vote—on this very simple resolution. And again, its simplicity defies any logic as to why we would not want to vote on it in the Senate. It is very simple: We support our troops, and we disagree with the President's proposed escalation of troops by 21,500.

It is right that we are here this afternoon and into Saturday debating the vote on that simple resolution. That resolution addresses the most critical and important issue before our Nation today. I deeply regret the Senate has been prevented from voting on a similar resolution, and that is why I will vote for cloture on this resolution tomorrow. I believe the Senate has an obligation—it has an obligation—to debate and to vote on the issue that is most important to America today.

For me, my constituents in Colorado know where I stand. I am a cosponsor of the bipartisan resolution which Senator WARNER and Senator NELSON and Senator COLLINS and others have worked on for some time. That resolution states in clear terms that the Senate disagrees with the President's plan to send more troops to Iraq. And, at the same time, that resolution truly offers a new way for us to move forward with this seemingly intractable problem we face in that part of the world.

I have referred to the Warner resolution as a new way forward, a new plan, a plan C, if you will, because it finds a middle ground between the President's plan A, which is to escalate the military effort in Iraq, and plan B, which is pushed by some American citizens in

each one of our offices every day who say we should immediately leave Iraq—we should immediately leave Iraq. From my point of view, the bipartisan resolution we came up with offers a new direction forward.

Our bipartisan group believes what we need to do is to have a new strategy in Iraq, one based on demanding long-overdue compromises from the Iraqi Government, vigorous counterterrorism activity, continued support of our troops in the field, protecting the territorial integrity of Iraq, and a very robust and enhanced diplomatic effort in that region and in Iraq itself.

The new way forward reflected in the Warner resolution is based on a number of key principles, as follows:

First, the central goal of the American mission in Iraq should be to encourage the Iraqi Government to make the political compromises that are necessary to foster reconciliation and to improve the deteriorating security situation in Iraq.

Second, the American military strategy should be focused on maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq, denying terrorists a safe haven, promoting regional stability, bringing security to Baghdad, and training—and training—and equipping the Iraqi forces.

These are important principles, and they continue.

Third, we say what we would like to see happen in Iraq is that the United States should engage the nations in that region to develop a regional peace and reconciliation process.

Fourth, we believe the United States should continue to engage in a strong counterterrorism activity, chasing down al-Qaida wherever al-Qaida might be.

Fifth, the American mission in Iraq should be conditioned upon the Iraqi Government meeting certain benchmarks, including ensuring an equitable distribution of oil revenues in that country.

And sixth, Congress should not eliminate or reduce funds for troops in the field because the brave men and women fighting this war need our support while they are in harm's way.

I believe plan C offers us the right way forward. It is my hope that resolution ultimately would be adopted by a large bipartisan group of Senators in this body.

I would like to discuss in further detail a couple of the key elements, at least in terms of how I see it, on how we move forward, on how we improve the security situation along Iraq's borders, and the need for an enhanced and much more robust diplomatic effort.

I believe the territorial integrity of Iraq, security along Iraq's borders, and, for that matter, security in the region is linked with the need for a renewed and vigorous diplomatic push.

The bipartisan Iraq Study Group stated in very simple terms:

The United States must build a new international consensus for stability in Iraq and the region. In order to foster such a con-

sensus, the United States should embark on a robust diplomatic effort to establish an international support structure intended to stabilize Iraq and ease tensions in other countries in the region.

In addition, the public portion of the National Intelligence Estimate—which was a consensus document produced by the 16 agencies comprising the national intelligence community—mentioned three things which could “help to reverse the negative trends driving Iraq's current trajectory.” It is important to note that each of these three strategies proposed by the NIE are fundamentally diplomatic and political, as opposed to military.

They are, first of all, a recommendation that the broader Sunni acceptance of the current political structure and federalism be brought about; secondly, that significant concessions by Shia and Kurds are required to create space for Sunni acceptance of federalism; and, third, a bottom-up approach is needed to help mend the frayed relationships between the tribal and religious groups.

The two most important documents produced on the Iraq war over the past 6 months, the Iraq Study Group report and the public portions of the NIE, recommend a renewed diplomatic and political effort as a keystone for security inside Iraq and in the region.

This is no surprise when you consider the situation along the borders of Iraq. To the east, we know of the damage Iran can potentially cause by crossing the relatively porous border in order to promote the Shia cause. Not only that, but Iran has steadfastly ignored the U.N.'s demand to halt their nuclear activities. To the south and west, Saudi Arabia might eventually decide to intervene on the side of the Sunnis, should the situation further deteriorate. To the north and west, of course, is Syria, which has a largely uncontrolled border with Iraq, across which foreign fighters and arms and terrorists cross even today as I speak. To the north is Turkey, which is watching the situation in Iraq and might decide to intervene in order to prevent an independent Kurdistan. Finally, Jordan, to the west, is feeling the strain of the massive influx of Iraqi refugees into their country, which could have a destabilizing effect on a country which is such an important ally of the United States.

Given the potential crisis on Iraq's east, west, north, and south borders, given the complex and conflicting interests the parties in the region face, and given the difficulty of imposing a military solution on this expanding, deteriorating puzzle, it is imperative to embark on a renewed and robust diplomatic and political effort in the manner outlined in the Warner resolution. That effort, in my view, must include the following:

First, it must include talks with each of the key players in the region. I agree with the Iraq Study Group report which stated that:

The United States should engage directly with Iran and Syria in order to try to obtain the commitment to constructive policies toward Iraq and other regional issues. In engaging Syria and Iran, the United States should consider incentives, as well as disincentives, in seeking constructive results.

This does not mean direct talks will necessarily succeed quickly or even succeed at all. But it does mean the United States should use every available carrot and stick, every diplomatic tool we have to try to stabilize the region.

Second, the United States and those who share a vision of a peaceful Middle East should organize an international conference to help the Iraqis promote national reconciliation and stronger relations with their neighbors.

Third, we should heed the advice of the Iraq Study Group and promote the creation of an Iraq international support group which would include each country that borders Iraq and other key countries in the region. That support group would work to strengthen Iraq's territorial and sovereign integrity and would provide a diplomatic forum for Iraq's neighbors, many of whom have competing and conflicting interests to negotiate.

We may very well engage Iraq's neighbors and find we cannot achieve common ground. But I believe that refusing to talk to our adversaries on principle simply because they are our adversaries has done us no good. Indeed, in our history, Presidents from both parties and of different ideological stripes, from Franklin Roosevelt to Ronald Reagan, have actively engaged countries and leaders with whom they strongly disagreed, and they did so because it was in the American national interest. In fact, even this administration diplomatically engaged a member of the so-called “axis of evil,” North Korea. And while this process was long and laborious, it appears to have borne fruit. I believe we are at a similar moment in Iraq, when a strong and tough diplomatic effort may offer our last best chance to achieve a measure of peace and stability for Iraq and for the region.

For that reason, I believe we should follow the advice of the Iraq Study Group, the authors of the National Intelligence Estimate, and the advice of Senators from both sides of the aisle in pursuing a new direction in Iraq. There are no guarantees of success, but we must make every effort to succeed before it is too late.

I want to make a statement relative to why I think it is such an important time for us to be involved in this debate. It was not that long ago when I went with two of the most distinguished Senators in this body to Iraq and Afghanistan and spent time in both countries with both Senator WARNER and Senator LEVIN. For all of us who are Members of this body, there are no two Senators whom we hold in higher esteem. They truly are Senators whom I would call “a Senator's Senator” because they have the respect of

their colleagues. They have the wisdom they have accumulated through their service to our country over decades, and they are always attempting to do what is best for the American interest. I remember in Baghdad having conversations with both Senator WARNER and Senator LEVIN and how they described how things had changed from the initial invasion to the time we were there in the heavily fortified Green Zone in Baghdad and as we traveled around the country.

Since that time, Senator WARNER and others have been back there. As we have heard in this Chamber, the distinguished Senator from Virginia talked about how 3 or 4 months ago, he described the situation in Iraq as drifting sideways. Today that situation is not only drifting sideways but it continues to deteriorate. So no matter how much our troops have done, the sacrifice they have made, the sacrifices their families have made, things have not only drifted sideways, they continue to deteriorate. The President's proposal, which is at the heart of this debate, has to do with whether we should send 21,500 more troops into harm's way. We should all ask the question whether that is something we shouldn't support, and we should have an opportunity to vote on that concept in this Chamber. We should have an opportunity to vote on that concept in this Chamber before the President moves forward with the escalation effort.

In my view, and part of the reason I joined Senator WARNER and Senator NELSON and others in their resolution, I don't believe it will work. I believe when we look at Operation Going Forward Together in June and Operation Going Forward Together 2 in August, they demonstrate that a surge of this kind will, in fact, not work. Indeed, the Iraq Study Group found that between the months of June and the time they issued their report, violence had escalated in Baghdad by 43 percent. So we have tried a surge twice, and it has failed. Now the President is saying we ought to go ahead and do yet another surge. I believe a simple resolution we can vote on that makes a simple statement that we support our troops and we oppose the escalation of the military effort in Iraq in the way the President has proposed is the right thing for us to vote on. It is the most important question of our time. It is appropriate for us to be spending this Friday and Saturday, and, if it so takes, all of next week, instead of going back to our respective States and working during the Presidents holiday to debate this issue, which is such a defining issue of our time. This is a defining issue for the 21st century, not only for Iraq but for the Middle East, for the war on terror which we wage around the globe; this is the defining issue, and it is appropriate for us to be having this discussion on the floor today. Hopefully, we will have an opportunity to move forward into the debate on this resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the cloture vote on the motion to proceed to S. 574. I will vote in opposition to moving forward on that resolution because I don't believe it offers me the opportunity to express what I believe this body should be doing on the war on terror and the war in Iraq and for our men and women in harm's way. I want to take a minute to explain as well as I can why I believe so strongly and so passionately in that regard.

Ironically, 30 minutes before I came to the Chamber, I got a press release from the Department of Defense announcing that deployment of over 1,000 members of the 3rd ID stationed at Fort Stewart, GA has been accelerated from June to March of 2007. Those soldiers will shortly be leaving our great State on their way to be deployed in Baghdad, specifically as a part of the President's mission to secure and hold and to build.

I can't be certain of this, but I imagine some of those soldiers are probably watching television today in Hinesville, GA. They might even be watching C-SPAN. They might even hear these remarks. So I make them in the belief and with the hope that they are listening, as well as those soldiers in Baghdad and Balad and Tallil who are watching their monitors in the mess hall or the command post, as well as those who are our enemies, those who would do us harm, those who are the reason we are in Iraq and Afghanistan today.

It is not right to send a mixed message in a nonbinding resolution while our men and women are deploying in defense of this country and at the order of the President, our Commander in Chief. The result of that is to send a message of doubt to our men and women and a message of hope to our enemy. We can have our differences—and anybody who watches the debate on this floor knows, we certainly have our differences—but there should be no difference or equivocation in the support of our men and women in harm's way and our men and women now on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan.

For a minute I want to talk about how deeply I believe in our options, because we only have two. The first is an opportunity for success. That is what the President has chosen. This surge, criticized by some, is even a part of the Hamilton-Baker report where they addressed a potential surge in their report. The President, after listening to many of us and to his commanders and, certainly to General Petraeus, has decided to deploy these troops to go into Baghdad, to go into Anbar, to secure it; and then, with the help of the Iraqi soldiers, to hold; and then, with the help of USAID, the State Department, and the world community, to build and to have a platform and a foundation upon which political reconciliation will take place. Every one of us knows that,ulti-

mately, reconciliation will make the difference in whether our hopes and dreams for the Iraqi people and the hopes and dreams they have for themselves will, in fact, take place.

I serve on the Foreign Relations Committee. I sat through 28 hours of testimony from countless experts, one after another. Most of them had mixed feelings on the surge. Some were unalterably opposed. Some said it may work. Some said it would work. They had differences of opinion, as we do. But in 28 hours of testimony, from expert after expert, from Madeleine Albright to Henry Kissinger, from think tank after think tank, from JACK MURTHA and Newt Gingrich—Newt a former Speaker of the House; JACK certainly outspoken on this issue in the House—every one of them agreed on one fact: A redeployment of our troops or a withdrawal would lead, at the very least, to thousands of deaths and more likely the slaughter of tens of thousands and maybe even millions of people in Iraq and possibly beyond in the Middle East.

Withdrawing, repositioning, turning our back is a recipe for disaster. And the world knows how important our success is. I spent last weekend in Munich, Germany, at the World Security Conference, where Vladimir Putin and the Iranian Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister spoke. We met with Chancellor Merkel of Germany and representatives from Bulgaria, Estonia, and Japan. Do you know what is so eye opening to me? With rare exception, each one expressed their appreciation for what the United States of America and our allies are doing, and their hope and prayer is we will succeed. They know what we know: We are in the ultimate war between good and evil. Iraq is but a battle in the war on terror that will move to other places. If we ever give comfort or hope to our enemy that we may turn and come home, leave the battlefield, leave them to their own volition, then we know it is the beginning of the end for the peaceful societies and the democracies of this world.

Chancellor Merkel of Germany—a country where popular opinion is very much against the war—announced her commitment of more Tornadoes to be deployed to Afghanistan. We have 46,000 troops there—23,000 Americans and 23,000 from countries around the world—pursuing to keep that fledgling democracy secure as the Taliban makes one last effort.

The enthusiasm of the world is in support of the United States and our men and women in harm's way. I think that enthusiasm should take place on the Senate floor in the United States of America as well. My vote tomorrow of “no” on the motion to proceed will not be a desire to cut off debate. It will, in fact, be a desire to elevate the debate. I think every side that is represented on this Senate floor ought to be a side that is spoken. I personally prefer the Gregg amendment and do not prefer and would not vote for the resolution

of the Senator from Nevada, which is the same resolution now being debated on the floor of the Senate. I think I ought to have an opportunity to express to the thousand members of 3rd ID leaving to go to Iraq, to the men and women in Iraq who are listening, and to the constituents I have in the State, regardless of which side of the issue they are on—the Senate deserves a right to debate all of the valid points of the questions that confront us in Iraq.

I know earlier in a speech given on the floor the content was primarily a recitation of the names of those who have died in uniform in Iraq from the United States of America. I don't take the position I take lightly, nor do I not think for a moment about the sacrifice that has already been made by men and women from my State—from PFC Diego Rincon, the first Georgian to lose his life fighting in Iraq—Diego, by the way, was not a United States citizen when he died, and we gave him citizenship posthumously because of the commitment he made to this country—to LT Noah Harris, from Elizabethtown, GA, who was a cheerleader at the University of Georgia on 9/11. He was so moved by what happened that he jumped into ROTC in his junior year and pursued a commission in the United States Army, received it, and went to Iraq. He died fighting for what he believed this country was all about: to stand up to the agents of terror and those who would use it to pursue their cause. Also, there was SGT Mike Stokely, a brave American who died in pursuit of freedom and peace in Iraq, and the hundreds of other Georgians who have been wounded or sacrificed their lives. They should not die in vain. They went for the reason that they believed volunteers are important to them and their country. They volunteered and made that commitment knowingly and willingly. They deserve the chance to pursue this effort for success in Baghdad and Anbar with enthusiasm from our Senate and our Government. From me, they have that.

When we read a list of those who lost their lives, we have to remember how long the list is of those who live today because our men and women in the Armed Forces, in wars past and in war today, fight for security and peace and fight for us to live.

We saw on 9/11 the manifest horror, tyranny and terror can bring, and we will see it again if we lose our resolve to pursue it wherever it takes us—Afghanistan, Iraq, or places yet known to us.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, with the confidence and pride in the men and women who serve in the Armed Forces and my willingness to fully support an opportunity for success rather than a recipe for disaster.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry: I understand I have 15 minutes within which to make my remarks; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority has 8 minutes remaining at this time. It would take consent to extend that time.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed and make my remarks in 15 minutes.

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

Mr. ROBERTS. I thank the Presiding Officer.

Mr. President, some weeks ago—and I mentioned this in my remarks during the debate we were having on the resolutions with regard to Iraq and the war—I said several weeks ago I had the privilege of attending and speaking at a farewell dinner in honor of LTG David Petraeus and his wife Holly at the Command and General Staff College of the United States Army at Fort Leavenworth, KS. And, of course, now General Petraeus is in Iraq and involved in the new mission as prescribed by the President and the subject of great debate not only here but in the House of Representatives, which is voting as I speak on their resolution in regard to this matter.

It was quite an evening of tribute in behalf of the general who has become admired and beloved serving as commanding general of the Army's Intellectual Center in Leavenworth, KS. Throughout the evening I had the opportunity to again visit with David Petraeus, his feelings about his new mission, his impressive knowledge with regard to this most difficult war in Iraq, the history of the region, his understanding with regard to the nature of past wars, his understanding of insurgency in past wars and the insurgency we now face in Iraq.

While at the Command and General Staff College, he wrote the Army's new manual on counterterrorism. Let me say, as a former marine, as the Presiding Officer is as well, I helped write a similar manual years ago for the U.S. Marine Corps. So I find this man unique in his knowledge and his command ability. But when I was asked to make remarks after the dinner—they would always invite a Senator to make some remarks and, unfortunately, sometimes that turns into a speech—I was glad I said what I said, and virtually everybody in that room told me I had said what they cannot say. Those who wear their officer rank on their shoulders or their enlisted stripes on their sleeves in most cases do not comment on policy decisions or politics, no matter how strongly they feel. They follow orders, and they serve their country. But I believe my remarks to the general and his officer corps and the veterans of many previous wars are

pertinent to the issue we face in this debate.

Before I express my views, I want to stress that I regret we are at a stalemate in this body. Obviously, they are not in the other body, in terms of a vote at least, on this issue of vital national security. I think most in the Senate wish we could debate this issue with comity, with cooperation, and, yes, in a bipartisan fashion. And I think the American people who are concerned, obviously frustrated and angry about the war, would certainly appreciate that, but that is not the case. This issue, very unfortunately, is wrapped around a partisan and political axle.

Our good friends across the aisle insist that we debate and vote on one of three nonbinding resolutions—there may have been an agreement on maybe one more vote—in regard to the war in Iraq, and that is all. They wish to debate and vote on the House resolution which is now being debated in the other body and about to come to a conclusion, or the Warner resolution, which I think are very similar, and then call it a day because both resolutions support the troops but not the mission.

This is the rub for many of my colleagues and myself, and it is about as far as the majority wishes to wade in the waters of withdrawal at this time. I realize if we were to consider other votes, it would be more pertinent to the issue, especially the amendment by Senator FEINGOLD, and that would be wading in the water a little deeper than they would want to at this particular time.

Others of us wish to debate and vote on the McCain resolution—I hope we can do that—and the Gregg resolution and, as far as I am concerned, the Feingold resolution. I oppose the Feingold resolution, but I admire his forthrightness and his courage. But we are being denied that opportunity.

Most perplexing to me is that those who are covering this debate within the media—and it is never a good idea to say anything that could be possibly defined as critical of the media. I note there are none or there may be two, but, obviously, everybody is watching the vote on the House side.

Having said that, how on Earth can we describe this situation by writing headlines and 15-second news sound bites saying Republicans, like myself, have voted to stifle debate? I want to debate. Let's have a debate. Let's have a full debate and vote on the House resolution and/or the Warner resolution—vote on both of them—but let us also debate and vote on resolutions offered by Senators MCCAIN, GREGG, and FEINGOLD. I will vote for Senator MCCAIN's resolution. I will vote along with Senator GREGG. I would not vote for Senator FEINGOLD's resolution but, again, I think his resolution is probably the most determining in terms of effect, and he should get a vote.

We are not stifling or shutting down debate; our colleagues in the majority

are. Either we are not capable of explaining what I believe is a very simple proposition or some in the media cannot discern what is obvious. This is like playing baseball, although it isn't like playing baseball—that is a poor allegory, but it is the one I have chosen—playing baseball with one strike and then you are out. You say: Wait a minute, usually in a baseball game you get three strikes. What happened to the three strikes? Where are my other two strikes? Where are my other resolutions that I want to debate, that I want to support because they are pertinent to this, certainly as much as the others? They are nonbinding as well. And the umpire—in this particular case the distinguished majority leader—says: Back to the dugout, Senator ROBERTS, I am sorry. We run this ball game. You don't have any further strikes.

I have information that the House has just passed the House resolution 246 to 182. That is a pretty solid vote. So, obviously, we will be getting to vote on that resolution, and I hope we will get to vote on these other resolutions.

In my remarks at the Command and General Staff College, I told General Petraeus we had not been personally acquainted over a long period of years, but in our short span of time, I certainly came to know him well. I have had several stimulating and enjoyable conversations with him over a wide range of issues, most especially the British experience in Iraq from 1921 to 1931, the example of Lawrence of Arabia. Lawrence of Arabia wrote "The Small Warfare Manual," and he wrote "The Pillars of Wisdom." As I indicated, the U.S. Marine Corps had similar manuals, one called a "Manual on Antiguerrilla Operations," which I participated in, and now the manual the general has written.

It seems we cannot get it right with regard to insurgencies. The same things we write in these manuals we have to be careful about and pretty well play out the problems, to say the least, that make it very difficult.

Anyway, with regard to General Petraeus, he is exactly the right man for the right job at the right time. He knows this. He has been to Iraq. He was successful in his second tour. He is going back. I hope and pray he will be successful in his third effort. Our brave young men and women in uniform deserve nothing but the very best leadership, and they are getting it.

But I think it is a paradox of enormous irony that the Senate confirmed David Petraeus without a dissenting vote—not one, not one Senator—a vote of confidence that is unique, certainly given today's controversy and turmoil and the times. Yet at the same time, the same Senators who gave their vote of confidence are now in the business of what I call—I don't mean to perjure them—"confetti" resolutions supporting the general and the troops but not the mission they are undertaking

now. That to me is unprecedented for the Senate. I think it is remarkable, and I have said many times that these resolutions—and it has been said many times—are nonbinding. They have no legislative impact. They are so-called sense-of-the-Senate resolutions. For those who do not pay attention to the parliamentary procedure around here, that means they are meaningless except for the message you want to send, and that can be important to the Executive, i.e., to President Bush and the folks back home.

With all due respect, we have long crossed the message Rubicon with regard to sending mixed messages to our allies, our troops, the American people, the media and, yes, our adversaries. Words have consequences and, rest assured, our adversaries will read to try and figure out, analyze every word of the resolution just passed in the House and perhaps the one, maybe two resolutions we can pass in this body, hopefully three or four, and try to figure it out. I suspect they will be absolutely flummoxed in trying to discern the sense in reading a resolution that states support for the troops and our new commander, with new rules of engagement, with a limited timeframe for achieving and reporting benchmarks of progress, but that opposes the mission. That is a mixed message, and it should cause quite a bit of head scratching among the 31 different terrorist organizations that are planning various attacks around the world and even on the United States. My real concern is that the Senate is not considering or even talking about the probable consequences of these actions, let alone our responsibilities should they happen.

I want to make it very clear I do not question the intent or purpose or patriotism of any Senator, regardless of whatever resolution they are proposing voting for. I do question the judgment and the law of unintended effects. Bluntly put, with all this debate with regard to nonbinding resolutions, we appear like lemmings splashing in a sea of public concern, frustration, and expressing anger over the war in Iraq.

In this regard, I don't know of anybody in this body or anybody in America who does not want our troops home at the earliest possible date, and stability in Iraq, if possible. If possible—and that is a real question here. That is not the issue.

When all of this confetti settles, the end result of all this frenzy will be: "General, you and the troops have our solid support—but we don't support your mission. However, press on and good luck."

I think that message is remarkable. This is not a profile in courage. This is not the Senate's finest hour. If we are going to debate and vote on nonbinding resolutions, let us at least consider resolutions that will send a clear message or which can be of useful purpose. In that regard, we should consider the McCain resolution. It lists benchmarks

of progress that General Petraeus has told Senator McCAIN and me would be useful in his discussions with Prime Minister Maliki, and certainly the Gregg resolution that supports spending for our troops in harm's way. I think that is the precedent we have to set. That is the killer in this debate, along with the Feingold resolution, because my colleagues across the aisle do not want to vote on the Gregg resolution, let alone the Feingold resolution.

Senator FEINGOLD has a resolution which certainly does something. I don't agree with his resolution, but he is at least very forthright and sends a clear message, and he is a good Senator.

As the former chairman of the Intelligence Committee in the Senate, let me again stress what is not happening in the Congress or the media, and has received very little public attention regarding this challenge we face in Iraq. No one is talking about the consequences of what will happen if we simply withdraw or redeploy. And we may just do that, because I do not believe this war can or should be sustained if we do not see progress in the next 6 months. If General Petraeus doesn't come back and tell us there has been measurable progress, where we can see it, feel it, and touch it, we have some serious policy decisions to make. We need to be thinking about a policy of containment as opposed to intervention if this latest mission does not work.

I would also point out that most of the time deadlines for withdrawal are either in the nonbinding resolutions or they mirror exactly the time period General Petraeus has told the Armed Services Committee he would follow in reporting whether this new effort is making any progress, pretty much along the lines of the benchmarks that are in the McCain resolution. So the obvious question is: Who can better make that judgment, General Petraeus in theater or Senators here on the floor?

We have not discussed the difficult policy decisions that may confront us if it becomes necessary to redeploy, what that mission might be if we redeploy, where are we going, what is the mission going to be, or even how to withdraw.

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

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I have about 4 minutes left. If I could ask unanimous consent that Senator DORGAN allow me that privilege, I would greatly appreciate it.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I have no objection to that, provided that the 30 minutes which was to have started for our side at 3:30 will be extended for the full 30 minutes following the completion of the presentation.

Mr. ROBERTS. I will try to finish as fast as I can. I apologize. I arrived late. I asked for 15 minutes, and I thought I could get it done in 15 minutes. Obviously, "Roberts-ese" is expanding that time period. I will try to finish as fast as I can.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the 30 minutes begin following the presentation of Senator ROBERTS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROBERTS. As I indicated, Mr. President, we have not discussed the difficult policy decisions that will confront us if it becomes necessary to withdraw or redeploy, what that mission would be, or even how to withdraw. The reality is what we will do when certain consequences would take place. These are the possible, if not probable, consequences we should be confronting and debating and explaining to the American people and ourselves and in the media, even if some may have a deaf ear.

First. A dramatic increase in sectarian violence quickly escalating to a civil war—and I mean a real civil war—and a humanitarian disaster far more devastating than what is happening now. Shia versus Shia, Shia versus Sunni. What do we do? Thousands of Iraqis have already become refugees and left the country.

Second. Given a civil war and struggle for control, we can expect an incursion of Sunni troops from other Mideast countries—I want to make it very clear about that: other Mideast countries—to prevent an Iranian takeover of Iraq and the very real possibility of an Iraq led by Muqtada al-Sadr, whose street appeal could endanger their own Governments. I am talking about other Mideast countries. When that happens, the war becomes regional. What do we do?

Third. We can expect an Iraq certainly dominated by Iran, thus completing a Shia crescent with Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. Today, countries such as Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt are talking about building their own nuclear programs, given Iran's nuclear ambitions and progress. Iran has just refused inspectors from the IAEA. With the possibility of Shia Muslims and Sunni Muslims each working to achieve nuclear capability and weapons, what does Israel do? What do we do?

Fourth. Iraq will become a safe haven for terrorists. This time it is for real. What do we do?

Fifth. In their eyes, with the defeat of the "Great Satan" only months away, as expected—a clear signal by this body and perhaps inevitable—terrorists around the world are already emboldened, waiting us out and planning more attacks; that is, if you believe what they say.

Read Afghanistan and the Taliban and the spring offensive. Will we soon be in the business of passing non-binding resolutions about Afghanistan?

Sixth. We can expect a perceived, if not real, lack of American resolve in the eyes of adversaries and potential adversaries around the world resulting in additional national security threats.

Read Putin and Belarus and Iran, and his recent remarkable speech at Mu-

nich in Germany at the NATO security conference. Kim Jong Il. We are making some progress with North Korea right now, but he does have a penchant for missile launches on the 4th of July.

Read Hugo Chavez—31 countries in the southern command. He is the new Castro, nationalizing his oil production and directly involved in five different countries. What do we do?

The point is that globally and over the long term this is not a Bush issue or a Democratic or a Republican issue, or even how you feel about Iraq or the war. Even as we argue about whether we debate and vote on one resolution or three or four, I hope, there are terrorist organizations and their second-generation affiliates—guided and inspired—are plotting attacks against the United States and throughout the world. It is obvious we can't sustain the status quo in Iraq, but while we debate on how to proceed, these folks are not giving up.

The irony is that should the President wake up in the morning and say, well, the House has voted for this resolution, they are not for this new mission, and the Senate is about to, and they may or may not do that, so I am going to terminate it, I am going to end it, then we are back to square one, back to a stalemate, back to the status quo. That, to me, doesn't make sense.

Given the fact there were at least five successful attacks that killed Americans—and others that, thank goodness, were not successful—before President Bush came to office and before military action in Iraq—given the fact this threat will face the next President and future world leaders, surely we can figure out it makes no sense to fight each other when the terrorists then and now and in the future do not kill according to party affiliation, nationality, race, age, or gender.

We do not need a Republican approach to national security and the war. We do not need a Democratic approach to national security and the war. We need, however, an American approach to our national security and the war and to our individual freedoms. This is a time to engage in honest dialog, to work together and think through and agree on the strategy that will defeat our enemies and make the American people safe. And yes, bring our troops home but in a way that we don't have to send them back.

So I say to the leadership, with all due respect, let us end this nonbinding business and get these confetti resolutions behind us. We have all had a chance now to discuss the war and we need to vote on I think at least four resolutions, and then come together with a bipartisan commitment—a difficult and perhaps impossible task but, I believe, a task that must be undertaken for the sake of our national security.

Mr. President, I yield back the balance of my time and I thank my colleagues across the aisle for permitting me to finish my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it is my understanding we were speaking in 30-minute segments and that the Senator from Kansas was allowed a little extra time to finish his remarks, which by my reckoning was about an additional 10 minutes. I want to clarify, and if a unanimous consent request is necessary, I will make that request, that the Senator from North Dakota be allowed to speak until 10 after the hour; and then, at 4:30, the next Democratic speaker would be recognized. So I think we would be back on the schedule that was spoken to earlier.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, thank you very much, and if the Senator from North Dakota will yield for a few minutes.

Mr. DORGAN. I yield to Senator DURBIN.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank my colleague for yielding.

IRAQ

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, an historic vote was announced in the House Chamber moments ago. By a vote of 246 to 182, the House of Representatives, in a bipartisan rollcall vote, has approved the resolution relative to the President's call for escalation of the number of troops serving in Iraq. That resolution is fewer than 60 words in length, and I believe it should be read into the RECORD. This is a resolution which we are hoping to bring to the Senate floor tomorrow so that the debate can begin in this Chamber. It reads:

Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq; Congress disapproves of the decision of President George W. Bush announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.

It is unembellished, it is straightforward, and it states a position. Those who agree with this resolution, as I do, should be heard. Those who disagree and believe we should escalate the number of troops in this war have a right to be heard as well. That is the nature of this institution. It is the nature of our democracy.

For the Republicans to continue to threaten a filibuster to stop the debate in the Senate so that Members of the Senate cannot come forward and express themselves and vote on this issue is wrong. It is unfair. It is inconsistent with the reason we ran for office. We were asked by the people kind enough to entrust us with this responsibility to face the issues of our times, to address those issues in a responsible manner, to have a civilized debate on the