

FEBRUARY 26, 2007.

Hon. HARRY REID,  
Senate Majority Leader U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR REID: It has been exactly 14 years since the first attack on the World Trade Center; over 5 years since the terrorist attacks of 9/11; and over 2 years since the 9/11 Commission released a blueprint for strengthening America's security. The pace of Congressional response to these wake-up calls has been glacial.

The House of Representatives has validated its commitment to improving national security by passing H.R.1. When S. 4 goes to conference, its provisions must match or surpass the strength and comprehensiveness of H.R.1. Failure to act ratchets up the danger for America. The longer critical security issues remain unresolved, the more time and options the terrorists have.

S. 4 should be a clean bill, limited to implementing the remaining 9/11 Commission recommendations. This legislation is far too important to be politicized by the introduction of non-germane, controversial amendments and debate, particularly those relating to Iraq. Attention to both issues is critically important. As such, each deserves separate deliberation.

We urge you to act now to protect America by passing stand-alone, comprehensive security legislation under S. 4 based on the 9/11 Commission blueprint without complications regarding Iraq. The legacy of those whose lives have been taken by terrorists on American soil is in your hands. Prove to the families of those killed in 1993 and 2001, and to all Americans, that this is a new day in Washington, and that safety and security will finally take precedence over special interest groups and politics.

Respectfully,

CAROL ASHLEY,  
Mother of Janice, 25,  
VOICES of September 11th.

BEVERLY ECKERT,  
Widow of Sean Rooney, 50, Families of September 11.

MARY FETCHET,  
Mother of Brad, 24,  
Founding Director and President,  
VOICES of September 11th.

CARIE LEMACK,  
Daughter of Judy Larocque, 50, Co-founder and President, Families of September 11.

Mr. REID. I say to my friend, the distinguished Republican leader and people on his side of the aisle, if people are concerned about going to S. 4 because of not being allowed to offer amendments, I have stated publicly—and I understand because there were no amendments on the continuing resolution—and I will state again, I appreciate very much the cooperation of the Republicans. Even though there were no amendments, this was an issue this Congress, this Senate had to complete. None of the Members of the body here are responsible for what took place prior to this Congress. The 110th Congress is our responsibility, and that is why I am very happy the Democrats and Republicans joined together and got the continuing resolution passed. We were able to work our way through the contentious matters we had dealing

with the Iraq war. I stated at the time we were doing that the 9/11 legislation will be subject to amendments.

Senator McCONNELL and I are working our way through this issue to determine when the next debate will take place regarding Iraq. I hope it can be done on an agreement between the two of us. We are working on that. But I do say, don't anyone suggest the 9/11 legislation will not be open to amendment; it will be. We are going to work our way through that. There will not be cloture filed on this legislation until—hopefully, it won't have to be done. I think this is a piece of legislation for which it would not be necessary. There certainly will not be anything in the next 10 days. We will take a look at it.

I will work in conjunction with the distinguished Republican leader to find out if cloture ever has to be filed on the 9/11 bill. But I would hope we could gain this extra 30 hours and move to it right away. We could get the opening statements out of the way and some amendments offered today.

I had a leadership meeting at 9 o'clock this morning. I told the Senators there they better be ready for some votes Friday, that we are not going to be finished by 10 o'clock Friday morning. We have to finish this bill and finish it in a way that is appropriate.

So we have a lot of work to do. When we finish the 9/11 legislation, we have stem cells, we have the budget, we have the supplemental during this work period. We have a lot to do. We will need the cooperation of both sides.

I spoke out here last night, and I did my utmost to lay out the facts. We have been able to get a lot done this last work period. It was a long work period. We were able to do some good things. We were able to pass the most comprehensive ethics and lobbying reform in the history of the country. We passed minimum wage legislation for the first time in 10 years. We got the country's financial house in order by completing that. We have done some good work. As I said last night, it has been done on a bipartisan basis. We have worked together. So I hope we can continue to do that.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

#### 9/11 BILL AND IRAQ

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I indicated to my good friend, the majority leader, yesterday, and I now reiterate publicly, our desire to go to the measure reported by the Committee on Homeland Security. I think we will be able to work that out in the next few hours. We have also had a good conversation about how to structure a debate on Iraq to follow the 9/11 bill. There are a number of important

amendments that Members on this side of the aisle want to offer to the 9/11 bill.

The majority leader has indicated there will be no desire on his part, and reiterated it here this morning, to prevent any of those amendments from being acted upon. So we expect a free-wheeling, Senate-style debate on the 9/11 bill in which a number of important amendments related to the measure are offered. I think we will be able to work out a way to go forward in the next few hours that will accommodate our mutual desire to have the right bill before the Senate regarding 9/11, and, hopefully, sometime shortly thereafter some kind of agreement to structure the debate on Iraq in a way that will be mutually acceptable to both sides of the aisle.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

#### EASTER RECESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, finally, let me say this. I have had a number of people come to me during the last several days. In fact, I got a call in Nevada. The House is having 2 weeks during the Easter recess. The Senate is going to have 1 week. Everyone should understand that. We are going to work—we cannot move as fast as the House. We have rules here that simply do not allow that. While we would all like to be able to go home and spend time in our respective States, that will not happen. We are going to have only a 1-week recess for Easter.

I would say during the rest of the year there are no set times. I have been as forewarning as possible to the distinguished Republican leader, telling him of the days we would not have votes, days we would have votes. I am going to do my very best not to have surprises in the schedule. One of the surprises we will not have is 2 weeks for the Easter break. We are going to have to work through that. Up until August, I am hopeful and confident we can get our work done. But the August recess is a long one, and everyone should understand that is not automatic. We have to get our work done or we may have to shorten that also.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I appreciate the clarity the majority leader brought to the issue of the Easter work period. I think that is very helpful to Members on our side of the aisle for planning purposes, and I appreciate his bringing up that matter this morning.

I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there

will now be a period for the transaction of morning business until the hour of 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the first 30 minutes will be controlled by the Republican leader or his designee.

The Senator from Texas.

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I am aware of two speakers during our period, the minority period of 30 minutes in morning business. As a result, I ask unanimous consent to be allowed to speak for up to 20 minutes out of that 30-minute period of time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. I thank the Chair.

#### IRAQ

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I come to the floor this morning to express my concerns about the growing politicalization of the debate over the war in Iraq. The reason I am concerned is because I think the revolving door of resolutions we have seen emanating from Washington, DC, has caused confusion. Now, I would be happy if the confusion were limited to our enemies. But, unfortunately, I think that confusion extends to our allies and perhaps even to the troops who are now serving in that war-torn country.

I do not believe that confusion is called for; rather, clarity is what we ought to be producing here. But this revolving door of resolutions being produced by those primarily on the other side of the aisle has seemed to contribute to our inability to speak with one voice on the one subject where we ought to be speaking with one voice; that is, our Nation's security. We ought not to be playing politics of any kind when talking about the lives of our troops or the resolutions which might have the unintended consequence of undermining their morale or causing our friends and allies confusion as to whether we are willing to stay the course in this battle of wills. This is a battle of wills.

If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle feel so strongly—as some of them clearly do—about the conflict in Iraq, then I believe they have an obligation to cut off funding. We have at least two Senators who have offered those kinds of resolutions—Senator DODD and Senator FEINGOLD. I would put it this way: If my colleagues really believe all is lost in Iraq and there is no possible way to succeed, then I think Senators could justly reach the conclusion that the only moral decision would be to deny funding to send them into harm's way. But instead what we see is an uncontrollable desire to tinker with our military operations, deciding in some cases what individual Members of Congress think should be

done on the ground and then on the other hand what kind of decisions ought to be left to commanders. I suggest to my colleagues that strategy will lead us nowhere. Congress should not be involved in micromanaging the day-to-day tactics of military commanders on the ground. Our Constitution provides for a single Commander in Chief, not 535 chieftains who can make tactical decisions about something as sensitive and challenging as war operations in Iraq.

We have heard there are between 5,000 and 6,000 members of al-Qaida in Iraq, primarily in Anbar Province. It makes no sense to me for us to pull out our troops until we have defeated those terrorists. Certainly, I disagree with those who say we ought to pull out our troops before we are able to stabilize Iraq in a way that it can sustain itself, defend itself, and govern itself because I think we know what will happen if Iraq becomes just another failed state in the Middle East, particularly with those 5,000 to 6,000 members of al-Qaida present in Iraq: It will become another Afghanistan.

As we all know, when the Soviet Union left Afghanistan, Afghanistan became a failed state, giving rise to the Taliban and al-Qaida in Iraq, the likes of Osama bin Laden among them. Of course, it was because they had a safe haven in Afghanistan that they could then plot and plan and train and recruit and finance their terrorist operations, and it allows them the safety and convenience to plan an attack against the United States, which they did on September 11, 2001.

Of course, we know, because they have told us, that one of al-Qaida's major goals in Iraq is to increase sectarian violence between the Sunnis and the Shias. Al-Qaida cannot defeat us on the battlefield; we know that and they know that. The only way they can prevail is if we give up, if we pull our combat troops out of Iraq until al-Qaida is no longer a threat there. We know that Sunni extremists, including al-Qaida, want to create a civil war that will tear the country apart. The only way al-Qaida will be successful in doing that is if we allow them to do so.

We need to let our military do the job in Iraq. We can't pretend to be able to make the best decisions from here in Washington, DC, about what kinds of tactics are likely or reasonably calculated to be successful several thousand miles away.

As recently as Sunday, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee appeared on a weekend talk show. I would like to read a little bit of the questions and answers which were produced from that interaction because I think it demonstrates exactly the kind of confusion I am talking about that I think ill-serves our troops and ill-serves our Nation during a time of war.

The question was this:

Will you set a goal for withdrawing combat troops?

Senator LEVIN says:

We would. We would follow basically the pattern that was set or proposed by the Iraq Study Group, which was to set a goal for the removal of combat troops, as you put it correctly, by March of next year.

Mr. Russert:

So how many troops would that be by March of next year would be taken out?

Mr. LEVIN said:

We don't have a specific number, nor did the study group, but it would be most. There would be a limited number of troops that would be left.

Mr. Russert said:

So out of 150,000, we would take out how many?

Mr. LEVIN:

I would say most.

Mr. Russert:

What would be left behind?

Senator LEVIN said:

It would be a limited number, which would—

Mr. Russert said:

Ten thousand, 20,000?

Senator LEVIN said:

I don't want to put a specific number on it because that really should be left to the commanders to decide how many would be needed to carry out these limited functions.

I think this brief Q-and-A demonstrates the kind of confusion that occurs when Members of the Senate, notwithstanding their best intentions, tinker with tactical decisions made with fighting a war several thousand miles away.

We know the power Congress has under our Constitution, and if, in fact, there are those, as I said earlier, who believe that all is lost, then I believe the only appropriate action to take would be for those people who hold that belief to try to bring a resolution to the floor that would cut off funding for this ill-fated, in their view, conflict. But my colleagues can't have it both ways. On the one hand, they can't say we should leave it to our commanders in the field to determine the number of troops, and yet when General Petraeus says he needs 21,500 troops to fight the terrorists in Iraq, these same individuals would tell him: No, you can't have them.

This is a question and answer from the nomination hearing for GEN David Petraeus.

Senator MCCAIN asked him:

Suppose we send you over there to your new job, General, only we tell you that you can't have any additional troops. Can you get your job done?

General Petraeus said:

No, sir.

The kind of confusion I think we have seen emanating from Capitol Hill is directly related to the revolving door of resolutions we have seen since the beginning of the year.

First, there was the Biden resolution. Senator REID, the distinguished majority leader, said, "Tomorrow the Senate will proceed to S. Con. Res. 2, the bipartisan Iraq resolution." He said that