

In more than 300 attacks since last year, no Marines have died while riding in the new fortified armored vehicles the Pentagon would like to rush to Iraq, the Marine Commander in Anbar Province said. Attacks on other vehicles cause more than two casualties per attack, including deaths.

IEDs are responsible for 70 percent of the casualties in Iraq. Yet, while this country has sent its soldiers to war, it has not mobilized the country. We do not have third shifts with the lights on 24 hours a day. We don't have Henry Kaiser producing 1 ship a day, 4,000 warplanes a month. In fact, this relates to something else I have talked a lot about on the floor of the Senate. Only two U.S. steel mills are qualified to produce the special armored steel for the Defense Department at this point—two. Both have been acquired by foreign companies in the past year and a half.

Let me say that again: Only two U.S. steel mills are qualified to produce armored steel for the Defense Department. Both have been acquired by foreign companies in the past year and a half. Oregon Steel is now owned by Evraz Group S.A. of Russia. The International Steel Group was acquired by the Dutch conglomerate Arcelor Mittal.

The Defense Department has requested that the armor steel made by both firms be categorized with what is called a "DX" rating for the MRAP program. DX stands for the highest national urgency. Under the 1950 Defense Production Act, any item with a DX rating gets top priority and must be furnished to the U.S. Government in advance of any other customers. Several other items that are critical to the MRAP vehicles—ballistic glass, transmissions, and Mack Truck chassis—are also supposed to receive the DX rating.

I am told Defense officials are in negotiations with both the steel mills I mentioned, that are foreign owned, to make sure there will be enough steel available for the various kits they need for the MRAP vehicle.

The point I want to make is simple: In the Second World War, we had some unbelievably brave soldiers, men and women who went halfway around the world to fight because their country asked them to fight for this country's freedom. But it was more than just soldiers; it was in virtually every manufacturing plant in this country and with virtually every citizen, through rationing, through production, through the capability to produce what the soldiers needed.

Contrast what we did in the Second World War with what we do today. We decide to send the soldiers to Iraq, but we make only a few of the MRAP vehicles that would save so many of those lives that are now being lost to IED explosions. We can't do this. This ought not be acceptable to anybody in this country. If we are going to war, the country needs to go to war with the soldiers. When the President sends us an appropriations request and says, Oh, by the way, the MRAP is a lower pri-

ority, we are not going to fund it, we are not going to ask for what the Marine Corps Commandant says is necessary in the field, we will ask for slightly less than a third of that number of vehicles—this Congress fortunately has said no, Mr. President, that is not what we are going to accept. We decided to invest in these vehicles as quickly as we can and move them to Iraq so when soldiers are on patrol and they are hit with an IED, they have better armor and a better opportunity to protect their lives.

There will be a lot of discussion in the coming days about who is right and who is wrong on all the funding issues with respect to Iraq. I want my colleagues to understand a couple of things. First, we have actually increased the funding requested by the President. We have increased the funding for couple of reasons. No. 1, we added funds for safer vehicles that the President did not request enough of will save the lives of troops; No. 2, we had to add funds for military and VA medical care because the President did not request enough money to care for the injured soldiers coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan. We increased the funding for both. We have actually increased the funding for the troops.

I understand there is a disagreement about the language with respect to Iraq. Ours establishes a "goal," not a requirement, a goal, hoping we can extract our soldiers from the middle of a civil war in Iraq within a year. That is a goal. I know the President and others suggest that somehow fully funding the troops and even adding more where it was necessary and establishing such a goal is pulling the rug out from under the troops, but nothing could be further from the truth. What I think injures our troops is to decide we are going to surge the troops but we will not surge the equipment necessary to protect them. That is wrong. This Congress has said it is wrong in the legislation we have passed.

I hope in the coming days and in the coming conflicts, whether it is dealing with Iraq or dealing with the terrorist threat around the world, we will decide in the future never again to send our soldiers in a manner that allows us not to use the full impact, the full capability of the American people to produce that which the soldiers need to do their jobs. That has been the case, regrettably, here.

Early in the Iraq war I received e-mails where people would send me pictures that illustrated what they were trying to do to protect themselves. Their humvees were not armored, so soldiers had welded patches of various kinds of metal to make them stronger. But now we have a new vehicle that can save a dramatic number of lives. The President's budget did not request nearly the money for it that should have been requested. So Congress added to it. I hope this is the first step to do what we should do with America's capacity to say to the soldiers: You have

not gone to war alone. This country goes to war with you, with every capability we have to protect you.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. KLOBUCHAR). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

Mr. WEBB. I ask the quorum call be rescinded and that I be allowed to speak for 15 minutes as in morning business.

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

VIETNAM

Mr. WEBB. Madam President, today is a day that, for Vietnamese around the world, is as significant as the distinctions we often make between B.C. and A.D. in other cultures. Thirty-two years ago today the Communist forces from North Vietnam finished their conquest of the south and South Vietnam ceased to exist. Ho Chi Minh would like to say the motivation for pursuing this war was independence and freedom. If we were to discuss independence, in the sense of removing foreign involvement, at that moment they were arguably correct. But if we were to discuss true issues of freedom, the aspirations of freedom for millions of people in Vietnam ceased on that day.

Some liked to call the conquest of South Vietnam liberation. For millions of Vietnamese around the world it was the loss of everything, including their country. A million people were sent into reeducation camps, and 240,000 of them stayed in those camps for longer than 4 years, some as long as 18 years; 56,000 died in those reeducation camps; an estimated 1 million people jumped into the sea during some periods, with more than a 50-percent chance of dying, and many of them ended up in this country. We currently have today in this country 2 million people of Vietnamese descent.

I do not want, at this moment, to refight the Vietnam war, nor do I want to dwell too much on the differences between the Vietnam war and the present war. But I have seen people on both sides talk about the Iraq war as if there were some correlation to Vietnam. I want to say that, for those who worry about how we withdrew from Vietnam, there is not a parallel. For those who worry, frankly, how we went into Vietnam, there is not a parallel. There are different continents, different governmental systems, different issues with respect to our national objectives. In Vietnam we assisted an existing government that had been created by international agreement. We fought side by side with an army that itself lost 245,000 soldiers dead on the battlefield. We fought for a very long time with the support of the American people—a reality that is sometimes

missed today as we look back on the tragic way the Vietnam war ended. A 1972 Harris poll showed even 8 years after we began our involvement in Vietnam, the American people agreed by a margin of 74 percent to 11 percent that it was important that South Vietnam not fall into the hands of the Communists. We rarely hear those statistics today. We rarely hear that viewpoint.

I stand here as someone who still today supports our national objectives in Vietnam and who was an early warning voice with respect to the strategic inadvisability of going into Iraq. On this special day of remembrance for so many Vietnamese around the world, I wish to give a salute, first, to our Vietnam veterans who fought with such great honor, whose sacrifices are rarely remembered in an affirmative sense. We saw 58,000 Americans die on the battlefields of Vietnam and more than 300,000 wounded; 3 million people served.

I also wish to thank the veterans of the South Vietnamese Army who also are so frequently wrongly portrayed in history. They fought alongside us. Many of them fought very well. As I mentioned earlier, 245,000 of them died in the battlefield and many more went through struggles after the war that are very difficult for Americans to digest. Imagine being in a reeducation camp for 13½ years, where you are allowed to see your family for 15 minutes a year. Imagine not having veterans status, either in Vietnam or in the United States, after having gone through, in some cases, 12 years on a battlefield.

I wish to thank those Vietnamese, the truly forgotten warriors who stood alongside us on the battlefield. I also wish to express my pride and appreciation to the Vietnamese who came to this country and showed us the strength of their culture, showed us what could have happened if South Vietnam had remained free. We now have 2 million Vietnamese Americans living in this country and they have done enormously well.

With respect to the Hanoi Government—I have been dealing with the Hanoi Government since 1991 when I first returned to Vietnam. I have made many trips back to Vietnam in many different capacities. They have made significant strides since those early days when they essentially were a Stalinist system. There is a lot to be proud of in terms of the transformations that have been going on in Vietnam. Vietnam is growing. It is growing economically. We have much work to do. We have much work to do in terms of encouraging that political system to open up, to allow religious freedom, to allow greater political freedom. We are on a pathway where, with the right kind of dialog, I believe that is going to occur.

I think the best legacy for us to have when we look back at that era would be to see Vietnam, the Vietnam of today, as a strategic and commercial

partner but also as a vibrant, open society whose Government reflects the strength of the culture itself, a strength that has been demonstrated over and over again by the Vietnamese who have come to this country and who, I am proud to say, are now Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I come to the floor of the Senate today where there is an opportunity for a historic moment. We have passed, despite critics who doubted it, a bill which is being sent to the President tomorrow. This bill is the supplemental appropriations bill for the war in Iraq. It is the seventh supplemental bill the President has asked for. These bills by their nature are supposed to be unexpected appropriations bills for unanticipated disasters and emergencies.

President Bush has decided to fund this war with these so-called emergency appropriations bills. It is hard to argue, in the fifth year of this war, that it is unanticipated that our troops need help. They are going to continue to need help as long as the President keeps them in Iraq and in the fight.

The President has already signaled his punch. We know what he is going to do with this bill. He said he is going to veto this bill. This will be the second veto in the 6 years or more that George W. Bush has served as President. Only twice will he have used his veto pen. The first was to stop a bill for stem cell research, a bill that had passed the House and the Senate with bipartisan support. I will not go through the litany of Republicans and Democrats who supported it. I was one. We sent it to the President urging him to reconsider his position that we ought to cut off medical research if it meant using embryonic stem cells, that it was better to use them for research than to have them discarded, thrown away. Use them for the valuable pursuit of cures for illnesses and diseases so that people suffering from diabetes, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, spinal cord injury, so many other different diseases, heart disease, for example, that they would have a chance with this research.

The President said, no, used his veto pen for the very first time and stopped that bill to continue to stop Federal funding of that research. I think the President was wrong and I believe others believe that as well.

Now we have a bill that is also about life and death. This is a bill about war. What we have said to the President is: We will give you money to sustain our troops in battle. In fact, we will give you more than you asked for our troops, but we want you to understand, as most Americans do, that we need a plan to bring our troops home.

The idea of funding this war indefinitely and watching it continue day by

weary day, month by bloody month, is unacceptable to the majority of Americans, unacceptable to the majority of the Members of the House and Senate.

When we started down this path just a few weeks ago, there were some who doubted that we would be able to find enough Democrats and Republicans to pass an alternative, a timetable for re-deployment of our troops. But we did. Despite the fact that there were 50 Democrats and 49 Republicans, that one of the Senators in our ranks voted with the other side of the aisle, we have been able to find at least two Republican Senators who will stand with us for the argument that it is time for American troops to start coming home.

But the President has said he is going to veto this bill. It will be ironic if he vetoes it tomorrow because, you see, tomorrow is the fourth anniversary of the President's announcement that our mission had been accomplished in Iraq, 4 years ago today we were told.

We have had 3,351 killed in Iraq, 3,351 soldiers, marines, sailors, and airmen. I called many of the families who have lost someone, dropped a note to others, attended a few funerals along the way when my schedule allowed. It is a heart-sickening feeling for a father like myself to walk into a funeral of a young man, 19, 20, 21 years of age, to watch parents with the pride, of course, in the service of their son or daughter, but the realization that they are gone, and what it means for the rest of their life. Madam President, 3,351 funerals. Maybe we don't realize that number because this administration has carefully avoided scenes where we would be reminded. They would not allow us to film the return of flag-draped caskets. What an irony that in the United Kingdom the flag-draped caskets have become the center of a national observance, the center of national respect as people pour out to show how much they cared for that fallen soldier. But in America it is kept quiet, but not quiet enough, because we know what is happening. We know what is happening to our country, and we know it has to change.

Madam President, today the former Director of the CIA, George Tenet, has published his book, "At the Center of the Storm." I worked with Mr. Tenet for 4 years as a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee. There were times when I was inspired by his public face and times when I was angry at some of the things he did or said or failed to do. He was, indeed, a public servant, and one with a long career. In the preface to this book, which talks about the war in Iraq in many parts, we have a section which I would like to read into the RECORD. It is an important section for all of us to reflect upon.

George Tenet speaks about the day after 9/11. Imagine, the head of the Central Intelligence Agency. America has been attacked for the first time since the British in the War of 1812. More