

who have been critical of our effort in Iraq seemed quite restrained yesterday. I said they were, and I think it is because the record General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker were giving us was one of remarkable progress militarily, politically, and economically. It was hard to criticize, so the criticisms were kind of around the side: Why can't you tell us when we will get out exactly? Why didn't President Maliki consult more before he went south?

What I wish is that our colleagues had accepted the facts General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker gave us of the extraordinary progress in Iraq, which is very critical to our security because it creates a victory for the moderates, the good guys in the civil war within the Islamic world, and it protects our security in that sense because, remember, it is the fanatics who killed 3,000 of us on 9/11.

Let's hope for another day when there will be an agreement on the facts, and maybe we can get together to figure out how we can accelerate progress in Iraq so what all of us want can happen, which is we bring as many of our troops home as quickly as possible, with honor and after success. What can Congress do? I would say two things, after listening yesterday. One is to pass a supplemental. The second is to stay out of the way and not force our military and diplomatic leaders to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. Don't impose deadlines.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator ALEXANDER be recognized for 3 minutes to celebrate a big event for the State of Tennessee.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, the Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LADY VOLS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from South Carolina for his courtesy, and the Senator from Arizona as well, and I note the presence on the floor of the Senator from Illinois and the Senator from Connecticut as well.

I am sure a great many of the men and women of our Armed Forces, over the last few days, have been watching basketball when they could, and yesterday I expressed my pride in the University of Memphis Tigers, how they got to the finals of the NCAA Men's Division in basketball only to be defeated by a very good Kansas team. Well, today I have even better news. Last night, the University of Tennessee Lady Vols won their eighth NCAA women's basketball championship. They defeated an extraordinarily good Stanford team.

The Tennessee team has very good players. The Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, and I talked earlier this morning about Candace Parker from Illi-

nois, from his home State. She may very well be the best woman college basketball player already. She is likely to be the first in the draft today of the WNBA, and this is her last year. She has graduated and has played 3 years.

There were four seniors who played. But even though there were extraordinary players, this one has to be about the coach as well. Pat Summitt has won national championships so often, she has made it look easy. She won last year as well as this year. She has won back-to-back championships before. She has won 983 games. This has been remarkably difficult. In her 34 years, she has dominated women's basketball. She has defined it. But she has also helped it with her spaghetti suppers for visiting players, with her encouraging other coaches, with her patience with the news media. She has shown her willingness to change, visiting with Phil Jackson about what offense to put in; to react to disappointment, playing with her superstar, the young woman from Illinois, Candace Parker, who was playing her last two games with a dislocated shoulder.

What I like best about the Lady Vols is not their winning streak over the years, it is the example they set. When I was president of the University of Tennessee, which was 15 or so years ago, I would proudly tell everyone that Pat Summitt and her teams have not only won championships, but their players graduated. It was true then and I believe it is true today that every single young woman who has played basketball for Pat Summitt for 4 years has graduated from the University of Tennessee. Pat Summitt not only requires them to go to class, she says: You go to class and you sit in the front row. I want the professors to know you are there.

Just a glimpse of Coach Summitt and her young players on national television is the best possible advertisement for the University of Tennessee that I can imagine. If Pat Summitt were the conductor of a symphony, one would say she has mastered the crescendo because she always plays the toughest schedule, but somehow she has learned as a coach to get the most out of her team, to have them playing the best as they get to the NCAA tournament, as they get to the Final Four, and as they get to the championship game, as they have so often.

So congratulations to the players, Parker and Hornbuckle, Bobbitt and Anosike and Auguste—those are the young women who played their last game last night. But special congratulations to Pat Summitt, whose remarkable career reminds us of what a mirror of the best of our society can look like.

I thank the President.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Of course.

Mr. DURBIN. I wish to address a question through the Chair, although it is more a comment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The assistant majority leader is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. And I would like to join with the Senator from Tennessee. We did speak this morning about that great game last night, and great praise to Stanford for yielding a wonderful squad and great players, too, and making it all the way to the finals. But a special praise to Pat Summitt and the Lady Vols from Tennessee. We had a special interest in the team because of Candace Parker. She is an extraordinary young woman, and watching her play with that physical challenge of her dislocated shoulder was an indication not only of her skill but of her courage.

When one of the players on the Tennessee team was injured toward the end of the game, you could sense the team feeling. There were tears running down the cheeks of fellow players. There was the sense of such a close-knit unit. That says a lot about them and an awful lot about their coach.

When we get into debates here on the floor of the Senate about title IX and women's athletics, I hope we can invite someone like Pat Summitt, someone like Candace Parker, and others to come and tell us what a transformative experience it has been for them to participate at this level of sport and to really achieve so much, not only on the court but in their lives, and I salute the Lady Vols.

I congratulate the Senator.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank the Senator from Illinois for his friendship, and we both admire a great coach and a great team and a great performance, which we saw last night.

I thank the Chair.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The assistant majority leader is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it is my understanding the majority now has 30 minutes in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

#### IRAQ

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the country is consumed with the appearance this week of General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker from Iraq. This is our annual report. Companies make annual reports. People like Warren Buffett call in to Omaha, NE, to shareholders of Berkshire Hathaway to talk about the state of his corporation and what the prospects are of the future. It has become an annual occurrence here on Capitol Hill that the two leaders from the diplomatic and military side come and make their report to Congress.

This is indeed the beginning of the sixth year of this war. This war in Iraq has lasted longer than World War II. By the end of this summer, it will have lasted longer than World War I and World War II combined. We have lost over 4,000 of our best and bravest, our

men and women in uniform who have given their lives in this conflict—30,000 injured. Many with permanent injuries have returned from this battlefield.

Our military has been stretched to the absolute limit. There is no doubt in my mind that the U.S. military is the best in the world. You only have to meet them, you only have to understand the challenges they have faced and the success they have shown to know that. But it troubles me that in the midst of this debate about how long we can stay in Iraq, we are actually saying: How long can our military stay in Iraq with the support of the American people?

An honest appraisal of the American military today, in the sixth year of this war, will tell you they have paid a heavy price beyond the deaths and injuries. There is a serious challenge facing our military. The leaders—General Cody, who testified just a few weeks ago, and General McCaffrey—have told us that Iraq has pushed the U.S. Army to the breaking point. That is a sobering appraisal by the military itself of what this war has done to our great military.

Just the other day, the Army reported increased stress, anxiety, and depression for 27 percent of soldiers returning to Iraq for a third and fourth tour. Those of us who have been there to meet with soldiers, as I have on three different occasions, will tell you that these extraordinarily long deployments of our soldiers are virtually unprecedented since World War II, and they have taken their toll.

Our soldiers today are usually married. In previous wars, they were not. So they go to battle remembering that they have left behind spouses and children. On a daily basis, they are in contact by e-mail. They know if the car doesn't start. They know when the baby has to go to the doctor. They know when there is a problem paying the bills. They know it in real time.

In addition to the stress of being in battle and in combat, they have the added stress of separation from their families and the knowledge that for many of them it will be 15 months in deployment before they can come home.

A lieutenant colonel from Georgia, a career man, said to me as I left: Senator, we have to do something about these deployments. They are just entirely too long. And the period between deployments isn't long enough. He talked about leaving Georgia with his daughter in the fifth grade and returning after his deployment to find her in the seventh grade. He missed a year of her life.

He also talked about the fact that bringing these troops home for a year or sometimes even less before they are sent away again doesn't give them time to rest, to reunite with their families, to be reequipped, retrained, and to bring in new recruits and integrate them into the unit. We turn them around so quickly because this admin-

istration, and those who support it, look beyond the obvious, take for granted that the military will be there time and time again, and pursue a foreign policy which, sadly, has been a misguided policy from the start.

I will recall that evening as long as I serve in this body, in October of 2002, when we cast that fateful vote to give President George W. Bush the authority to invade Iraq, an authority which he used. It was a historic night and a sad night for many of us. Twenty-three Senators, 1 Republican and 22 Democrats, voted against the authorization to invade Iraq. I recall that evening believing that this President was poised and prepared and ready to go into Iraq. He had misled through statements—inaccurate statements. The American people were misled about the circumstance involving that invasion.

Do you recall the fear we had? We were told about weapons of mass destruction—biological, chemical weapons, nuclear weapons. We were told Saddam Hussein was somehow linked to the terrible tragedy of 9/11. We were told his continued presence in the Middle East made it more dangerous for Israel, for many of our closest friends and allies. We were told he was developing predator aircraft that could be sent in remote ways to drop these weapons of mass destruction all around the Middle East, if not beyond.

Virtually every one of those statements made by this administration prior to the invasion of Iraq was wrong, inaccurate, and was proven to have been false. America was misled into this war.

That does not diminish in any way the bravery and courage and determination of our troops, but it says that the policymakers, many of whom are finally going to leave the scene in a few months, have to accept the verdict of history that they were wrong. They were wrong to lead us into this war, and the price we have paid has been a heavy price for that deception and that mistake.

They come now and tell us that even if we were wrong getting into this war, even if it lasted far longer than anyone anticipated, even if the cost of this war in human lives and actual dollars went dramatically beyond anyone's expectation, we have to "stay the course." We have to stay the course. How many times have we been told by these military leaders and by the President that when the Iraqis are prepared to stand up with their own defense force, America's troops can stand down? I have heard that until I am weary of it.

Years ago, when I went to Iraq, I was greeted then by General Petraeus, who was not in charge but was part of the leadership there, and he took me off for a little exercise at the airfield to show me what the troops were doing—the Iraqi troops. I couldn't tell you whether it demonstrated skill or not. I am not an expert in military deployment by any means. But a handful of Iraqi soldiers, whose faces were hooded so

they couldn't be identified by other Iraqis, went through the routine of a drill. I suppose it was undertaken to impress us. It didn't. I thought to myself: I will believe the Iraqi military has really reached the point of professionalism when they start replacing American soldiers and American soldiers start coming home.

Year after weary year, we have invested millions and millions of dollars in the training of their soldiers and their police. Yet 140,000 of our soldiers are still rising this morning and every morning risking their lives for the people of Iraq.

I sometimes wonder if the Iraqi people have really come to the basic conclusion as to whether they are a nation worth fighting for. I do not know the answer to that. When you hear what is going on in Iraq recently, where 1,000 Iraqi soldiers turned and deserted in battle, it is not encouraging. It tells me that despite all the time, all the money, and all the bloodshed, this war continues unabated.

I know now that many want to see this administration leave and hand over the quagmire of Iraq to the next President. That next President, whoever that person may be, will inherit two wars from this administration—in Iraq and Afghanistan—a recession, a situation where health care across America is in crisis, an energy challenge the likes of which we have never seen in this country, an environmental challenge of global warming that challenges not only our Nation but the entire world, entitlement programs such as Social Security and Medicare on the ropes, and, unfortunately, a country that needs real leadership. That is the legacy of the Bush administration.

For General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker to come before us and talk about staying the course for another 9 or 10 months, to me betrays the obvious. We have given the Iraqi people more than any nation can ask, in terms of human life and treasure. It is estimated that the total cost of this war will be somewhere in the range of \$3 trillion. What could we have done with that money in America had it been spent for America's strength? Just imagine: We could have provided 5.7 million Americans with health coverage each year since the war began, hired 430,000 new teachers across America, built 1 million units of affordable housing, and provided 4-year scholarships at State universities for 4.7 million students. Instead, the money has been sunk in Iraq.

Just so the record is straight, the Iraqis are not paupers. They have bountiful sources of oil that they sell. While we labor with one of the largest deficits—in fact, the largest deficit in the history of the United States, a debt, a mortgage we are passing on to our children—while we labor with that and are asked by the President to send another \$100 billion into Iraq with the next request coming in just a few days, the Iraqis today have a surplus in their

treasury of over \$25 billion. We are sacrificing in America to send money to Iraq to rebuild their country while they are building a surplus in their treasury from their oil revenues. What is wrong with this picture? There is no earthly explanation for that, and it is a fact.

I think, too, of what this means in the long term for the next President. That next President is going to inherit a terrible situation, finding an honorable way out of Iraq. I notice when the Republicans refer to that they always talk about a precipitous withdrawal. No one is calling for that. But the Democratic candidates for President are talking about bringing our troops home. I do not believe there is any other way for the Iraqis to be convinced that this is their nation and their future and their responsibility. As long as they can dial 9-1-1 and order up the best and bravest soldiers in the world to come from America and defend them, they are not going to accept their responsibility and do what is necessary.

Meanwhile, our military is devastated by this war. West Point-educated officers are leaving the Army in record numbers. Between 2001 and 2004, there was a doubling of the Army's divorce rate and a dramatic increase in suicide among the members of the military, particularly from the National Guard. In addition to that, we know we are waiving requirements for recruits. One out of eight new Army recruits has a criminal record, some with serious charges. We are lowering the requirements for basic education to bring in recruits. We are offering thousands of dollars to 19-year-olds fresh out of high school if they will just sign up to be in the Army. That is not good for the future of our country. It is not good for the future of our military.

We know that an estimated 90,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed, and maybe more, innocent people caught in the crossfire of a war. We know there are literally millions of Iraqi refugees, and shamefully the United States has been unwilling to even accept Iraqi refugees who have risked their lives for our troops and our safety. It is just unconscionable that countries around the world are accepting these refugees and the United States, which has needed them and used them, refuses to accept them. It is a fact.

We have dangerously emboldened Iran, which is moving closer to the development of nuclear weapons with this morning's announcement. In fact, it was actually Iran that helped broker an end to the recent violence in Basra.

If this invasion of Iraq was determined to show the strength of the United States, it is hard to show while we are still there 6 years later with no end in sight. If this invasion of Iraq was designed to diminish the power of Iran in the Middle East, it is hard to believe anyone could make that assertion today, with proof to back it up. That is the reality of what we face.

When I hear Senator MCCAIN and Republican leaders talk about staying the course, I understand—and I hope Americans do—that we need to change the course. We need to change the direction of this war. We need to start to bring our brave soldiers home to the victor's welcome they deserve. We need to start to say to the Iraqis: Stand up and defend your own country. We need to start extricating ourselves from Iraq so this money we are now spending to build Iraq and make it stronger can give us strength right here at home. Instead of creating jobs in Iraq, we should be creating good-paying jobs right here in America, jobs that can't be outsourced, jobs that make a decent paycheck with benefits and health care and a promise of a good pension. We should be investing in this country's schools, in this country's hospitals, in this country's infrastructure, and the Iraqis should use their oil revenues to strengthen their own country and come together and make the hard political decisions which they have avoided.

I will close and turn it over to my colleague, Senator CARDIN from Maryland, by telling you that the debate will continue, and in a few weeks the President's supplemental request will be before us. It is another opportunity for us to engage this Chamber in a debate. I know and we all know that the majority of Republicans refuse to join us in talking about the change in direction in this war. We know as well that this President will veto anything that changes his policies. He is determined to leave office with Iraq in the same condition that we know it today, with no change in basic policy before us.

The time is coming and coming soon—in November—when the American people have the last word. Finally, after 4 years, they get a chance to speak. They get a chance to pick a leader, to change the direction of this country in the right way, to make certain we have economic policies that build America and make it stronger—our families and our businesses—and to make certain we have a new policy in Iraq which really focuses on capturing Osama bin Laden, beating back the al-Qaida wherever they are found—in Pakistan or Afghanistan—making America safe from terrorism, and stopping what has been a longstanding and negative impact of this President's policy in Iraq.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MCCASKILL). The Senator from Maryland is recognized.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, first, let me compliment and thank the assistant majority leader, the Senator from Illinois, for his consistent comments with regard to the U.S. role in Iraq. He has made it clear that the U.S. interest has not been served by these last 5 years, that we have lost our focus on the war on terror. As he pointed out, we have real concerns, internationally, about terrorism, and we have been distracted, particularly in

Afghanistan, because of the focus on Iraq.

He pointed out very clearly that the United States has invested so much—the lives of our soldiers, the cost to the taxpayers, those who have come back wounded. And what have we done this for? These soldiers deserve the right mission: that we concentrate on dealing with the war against terror, that we have the Iraqis take responsibility for their own country, particularly in the midst of civil war. A lot of this is just Iraqis fighting Iraqis—Shiites fighting Shiites for power—and the United States has sustained fighters on both sides, in some cases. This is so counterproductive to U.S. interests.

I congratulate the Senator and thank him for continuing to bring out these issues. We hope in the next 10 months there will be some changes. We also understand we have to transition to a different mission, considering the type of sacrifices that have been made by our troops and the taxpayers of this country. I thank him very much for his leadership.

Madam President, I was part of the Foreign Relations Committee yesterday when General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker testified before our committee. When I had the time, I started to thank, on behalf of the people of Maryland, General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker and all the soldiers and all the diplomats who have served in Iraq. They have served with great distinction. I am humbled by their skills and sacrifices. I acknowledge the tremendous sacrifices that have been made by their families. But I must tell you, they deserve the right mission, what is in the best interests of the United States. How should we judge that progress? It is an interesting point, as to whether we have made satisfactory progress in Iraq.

Let me go back to January 10, 2007, when the President brought forward his "New Way Forward in Iraq." His own words were that:

If we increase our support at this crucial moment, and help the Iraqis break the current cycle of violence, we can hasten the day our troops begin coming home.

One of the reasons for the surge was to reduce our troop levels. But if we look at the presurge troop levels, it was 132,000 Americans; at the height of the surge last July, 160,000; and today, we have more than 140,000. We learned yesterday that General Petraeus believes we will be at that 140,000 level for the indefinite future, that there cannot be a commitment made at this stage to reduce our troop levels below 140,000. So at the end of the day we have more troops in Iraq rather than less.

The President stated in that same speech:

Over time, we can expect . . . growing trust and cooperation from Baghdad's residents. When this happens, daily life will improve, Iraqis will gain confidence in their leaders, and the government will have the breathing space it needs to make progress in other critical areas.

As a result of that, benchmarks were established—not by the Congress, benchmarks were established by President Bush and his administration with the Iraqi Government. When you look at the progress we have made—let me use General Petraeus's comments that he made:

No one [in the U.S. or the Iraqi government] feels that there has been sufficient progress by any means in the areas of national reconciliation or in the provision of basic public services.

Only 3 of the 18 benchmarks have been satisfactorily met. The circumstances on the ground in Iraq are unsatisfactory. Iraqis are not getting the basic services they need.

I questioned Ambassador Crocker, and following up questions that I posed to a panel we had last week before the Foreign Relations Committee, a panel of retired generals, experts in this area, and that was: Can you name a national leader in Iraq who is willing to step forward to provide the type of leadership, make the necessary concessions so that you can have a government in Iraq that has the confidence of its people? Because that is what we need to make the political progress. No one could mention a person's name. Ambassador Crocker said—and I used the examples of South Africa and Northern Ireland, where you had people willing to step forward—Ambassador Crocker said:

There is no Nelson Mandela in Iraq.

What an understatement that was. That was the understatement of our hearing.

We seem to be changing our goals as to what is success or what we are trying to achieve, what is in the best interests of America, what type of government we want in Iraq. Well, our expectations certainly have changed there. There is no expectation that we will have the type of strong national government that has the confidence of all the ethnic communities. We have changed the expectation as to what that Government in Iraq's relationship will be with Iran. We seem to acknowledge that it may, in fact, strengthen Iran. There is no agreement now that we need to reduce our troop levels—certainly by the administration's mission. They want to maintain the troop level at the current level with no commitment to reduce it. There is certainly no expectation to reduce the cost to U.S. taxpayers. We are going to get a supplemental appropriation asking for more money from the U.S. taxpayers.

We certainly have not focused on the major dangers against terrorism. If we did, we would be concentrating on Afghanistan, not spending so much effort in Iraq. The current situation yesterday was characterized by our experts as: fragile, uneven, reversible. We went through the current flare-ups in Basra and Baghdad where Shiite are fighting Shiite, a fight for power within Iraq with U.S. soldiers in the middle of that power struggle.

We went through the influence of Iran and that the U.S. soldiers' presence may, in fact, be generating more support for Iran within Iraq. So let's take a look at the facts: The United States is supporting warring parties within Iraq. The fact is, over 5 years, over 4,000 soldiers have died, American soldiers; 30,000 American soldiers have been wounded.

I have visited them. I know these are life-changing injuries they will have to live with for the rest of their lives. Six hundred billion dollars and still counting of U.S. taxpayer money has been spent. This is a difficult mission for us to maintain. Look at our military. Our military is stretched. Look at our National Guards. I know what is happening in Maryland and our National Guard. They are serving with great distinction, but they are exhausted, and we need them in Maryland.

Look at our economy. We are losing jobs here in America. One reason is we are so focused on spending money in Iraq, we are not investing in our own country. Look what is happening on our fight against terrorism. Prior to our invasion of Iraq, there was no al-Qaida presence in Iraq. Now we have hundreds of thousands of troops, American and Iraqis, and a couple thousand al-Qaida, according to General Petraeus.

We are not focused on the war against terror, we are focused on a power struggle within Iraq, which should not be our focus. We need to do a better job in Afghanistan, but yet we are stuck in Iraq. We have no plan to draw down American troops. I find that unacceptable. That is not in the best interests of this country.

Let me mention one more aspect of what has happened in Iraq. This is factual: the number of displaced people, nearly 5 million now, nearly 5 million displaced; 2 million in neighboring countries. General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker acknowledged that one of the reasons why violence in Baghdad is down is that the communities, the neighborhoods have been ethnically cleansed and people have left. They do not want to be in a violent neighborhood. They have left.

But they are displaced. What is going to happen to them? Nearly three million in Iraq alone. The United Nations High Commission on Refugees has said it is not safe for them to go back to their neighborhoods. What is going to happen? If we are talking about a solution for Iraq, we have got to take a look at the refugees. This is a humanitarian concern, it is a security concern, it is also a concern about stability in the region.

Let me give you one example. Jordan has now an extra 8 percent of its population as a result of refugees; an 8-percent increase. Now, if you used the same numbers in America, that would be 24 million, 24 million people coming to our country. Think about the stability of the region.

Well, my position has been clear. I have opposed the war since its incep-

tion. I opposed giving the President the right to use our military more than 5 years ago. I have opposed the manner in which this war has been conducted. But we are where we are. We cannot reverse history. Where do we go from here?

Well, we have 10 months left in this administration, 10 months to go, and the status quo is not what we need. We need to change course in Iraq, focus on the war on terror, rebuild and strengthen our military. We have got to do that and stop spending \$12 billion each month in Iraq at the expense of priorities right here at home. That is what we need to do starting immediately. We should not wait until the next election. We should start doing this today.

We need to change our mission. Our mission should be U.S. soldiers fighting terrorists, not refereeing community fights, neighborhood fights; American troops protecting our interests and helping transition the Iraqis to take responsibility for their own security.

We should draw down the U.S. troops, bring them home. The status quo is not acceptable, that is, 140,000 U.S. troops remaining in Iraq.

There was bipartisan recognition that the status quo is unacceptable. Several of our most distinguished Republican members of the Foreign Relations Committee made it clear that the status quo is not acceptable, yet this administration is trying to maintain the status quo for the next 10 months.

I hope we can change that. Public opinion is against the status quo. We know that. What we need is a surge in diplomacy. We need other countries that have a direct interest in what is happening in Iraq to step forward. We need to engage international organizations, the United Nations and the OSCE. We have to have the Iraqis step forward and take responsibility for the security of their own country. They have oil. We need the Iraqis to pay for the costs of their own defense. The American taxpayers should not be doing this.

One more thing I should talk about that we do not need: We do not need President Bush and the Iraqi Government negotiating a long-term security plan without Congressional approval. That would only restrict the options of the next administration or future Congresses. We should never allow that to happen.

The world has an interest in a safe and secure Iraq, but in working toward that end, we cannot ignore other competing needs around the world and at home. We need a more thoughtful approach that will bring our troops home, refocus our resources on al-Qaida, and Afghanistan and Pakistan, step up diplomatic efforts, and internalize the effort to bring stability to that country and to the Middle East.

I yield the floor.